...

-Jerk!

YOU MEAN PUPPET.

YOU...

...TUFFET!

...YOU...

SEE? WHEN WE'RE LIKE THIS...

...LOOK MUCH SMALL-ER...

HE DOESN'T CARE.

I meant to say puppet!

I SEE.

"I COULDN'T CARE LESS."

TEA OR A SPORTS DRINK...?
WHAT TO DRINK?
I'm thirsty...
BEEP BEEP
...
HMM ...
CLUNK
MORNING!
MORNING!
...
DON'T LEAVE YOURSELF WIDE OPEN!
Too strong!
GREEN TEA AU LAIT!!

Day Duty

Kasukabe Hamsuke

SORRY ...

HUH? I AM?

KOSUKE, YOU'RE ON DAY DUTY TODAY.

HEY!

Get off!

You're heavy!

Such childish tricks!

Whoa!

I'll teach you a lesson!

Ha ha ha!

IT WAS YOU!

Ka Ha

WHO WROTE HAMSUKE?!

BUT YOU KNOW...

KOSUKE LOOKS LIKE A KID WHO'S JUST FOUND A NEW TOY.

CRASH

Ouch!

I'M SO EMBARRASSED.

'MORNING.
THAT'S NOTHING NEW.
HAVE YOU HEARD FROM RURI? SHE DIDN'T SHOW UP FOR FIRST PERIOD.
YEAH?
SHE'S LUCKY...
HEY, GUYS!
...five, six, seven...
One, two, three, four...
YOU WERE COUNTING THEM? JEEZ!
YOU SHOULD HAVE CALLED ME!
RURI! WHAT HAPPENED? YOU HAD ME WORRIED!
All dirty
I FOUND A LINE OF ANTS ALONG THE WAY...
GIGGLE
GIGGLE
What?
MINAMI-CHAN LIKES LITTLE THINGS.
YEAH.
SEE?

DON'T JUDGE ME BY MY LOOKS.

IT'S THE CLUB FORM! WHICH ONE ARE YOU JOINING?

BASKET-BALL? VOLLEY-BALL?

HMM.

Extracurricular Activities

I CAN'T DECIDE.

Name

Class

Club

THAT'S AN INSULT, TOO.

ARE YOU IN A CLUB?

KENDO? JUDO?

SOME MIGHT NOT MIND IT.

HOW ABOUT YOU JUST QUIT BEING BLOND?

DO YOU THINK I CAN WITH MY BLOND HAIR?

I DON'T BELONG TO ANY.

OH, YEAH.

I didn't realize that—

...

I DON'T WANT TO BE UNDER-ESTIMATED BECAUSE I'M SMALL!

I LOOK STRONGER!

HUH?

NOPE!

WHY DO YOU DYE YOUR HAIR?

64% 13:28

MY FRIEND FROM MY OLD SCHOOL IS VISITING THAT DAY.

WHAT? YOU CAN'T MAKE IT?

I'M SORRY.

SORRY!

OH, WAIT A MINUTE...

THE 24TH IS...

But I'm freezing!

Don't slack off cleaning!

Hey!

Sorry!

I wanted him to wear this.

THE LUCKY BOY ISN'T COMING TODAY?

HIS FRIEND FROM HIS OLD SCHOOL IS VISITING.

IT MUST BE A GIRL.

FRIEND...

ON THE 24TH

MERRY CHRIST-MAS!

DEFEATED

VROOM

MERRY ...

I FORGOT TO TELL YOU!

CHRISTMAS!!

DING

FWIP

DING

FWIP

DING

WHAT DID I LOOK LIKE JUST NOW?

LOOK LIKE?

"You're in love."

HA HA! WHAT A PITY FOR A BIG GUY...

Doesn't

feel bad

AH!

ドク HEART

ワク WARMING

BUT YOU'LL GET ANGRY AT ME.

COME ON! I WANT TO KNOW!

I'LL BE ANGRY EITHER WAY!

WHAT?!

I CAN'T TELL YOU.

IT WAS ON YOUR HOOD.

AHH! I see.

CONTACT

FOUND IT!

RIGHT?

How dumb.

NO WONDER WE COULDN'T FIND IT!

WOW! I haven't seen his eyes in a while.

I'll take the other one out, too.

STARE

STARE

They really are contacts.

DISHEVELED
AH! MINAMI!
I told you it damages your hair!
YOU SLEPT WITH YOUR HAIR WET AGAIN, DIDN'T YOU?
IT'S A PROBLEM! COME OVER HERE!
COME ON, WHAT'S THE FUSS?
Blah Blah Blah
You never leave me alone.
THAT'S MY TASK.
MY LOVE CAN BE UNREQUITED FOREVER.

Keika watched helplessly.

I CAN'T MAKE FRIENDS LIKE THIS.

...!

I'M SO WORN OUT.

WAIT...

I touched him!

There!

I HAVEN'T EVEN HAD A CHANCE TO SAY HI TO HAM-CHAN.

UM.

WANNA STOP AT MOC ON THE WAY HOME?

NAH.

I'LL PASS.

OH.

REALLY?

I'm stuffed.

See ya.

Cheek pouches ...

HEY, KOSUKE!

Dough

HANEHIKO!

WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?!

THAT'S MY LINE...

SEE? HEIGHT DOESN'T MATTER...

EEEEK!

I GREW! SEE? AN INCH!

YOUR GROWTH IS STUNTED BECAUSE YOU NEVER LET THE SMALL THINGS GO.

Your mom wouldn't approve!

RAKU, YOU'LL BECOME EVIL IF YOU HANG AROUND WITH THIS SNAKE!

NOT A CHANCE!

YOU TWO ARE FRIENDS ?

I'M GOING TO BE BEATEN TO DEATH BEFORE THAT COULD HAPPEN.

SHRIEK

GIRL

No Boys Allowed Keep out!

ANY-WAY.

WHAT?

?

SNAIL ATTACK

EEEEK!!

WAH!!

GET IT OFF ME!

I WIN!

CLACK

ZIP

NOW, WHERE'S MY UMBRELLA?

AH...

?

...

It was raining the other day.

IT'S AT HOME ...

HAM-CHAN.

I'LL TRY TO FIND IT

Come on, it already had scribbles all over it!

DON'T SCRIBBLE ON MY TEXTBOOK!

KEIKA!

YOU DORK!

NEW HORIZON

marked the letter H in red.

I'll swap it with Keika's book!

UH, I THINK WE WERE IN THE MIDDLE OF MOVING HERE THIS TIME LAST YEAR.

YOU LIVED IN ANOTHER TOWN LAST SUMMER, RIGHT?

...BECOME PRECIOUS TO ME?

...

OH, YOU WERE.

So it's been a year

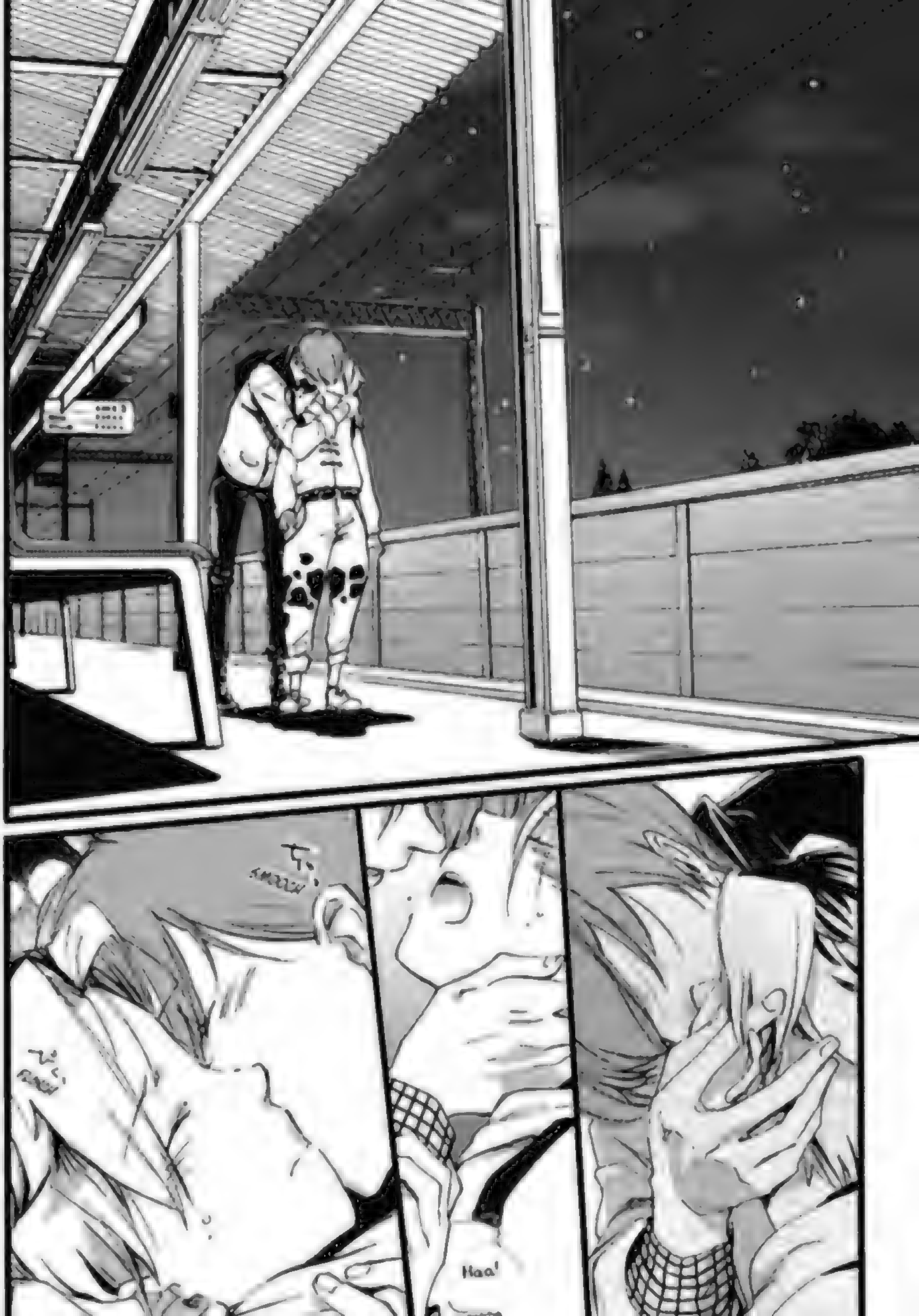
BY THE WAY...

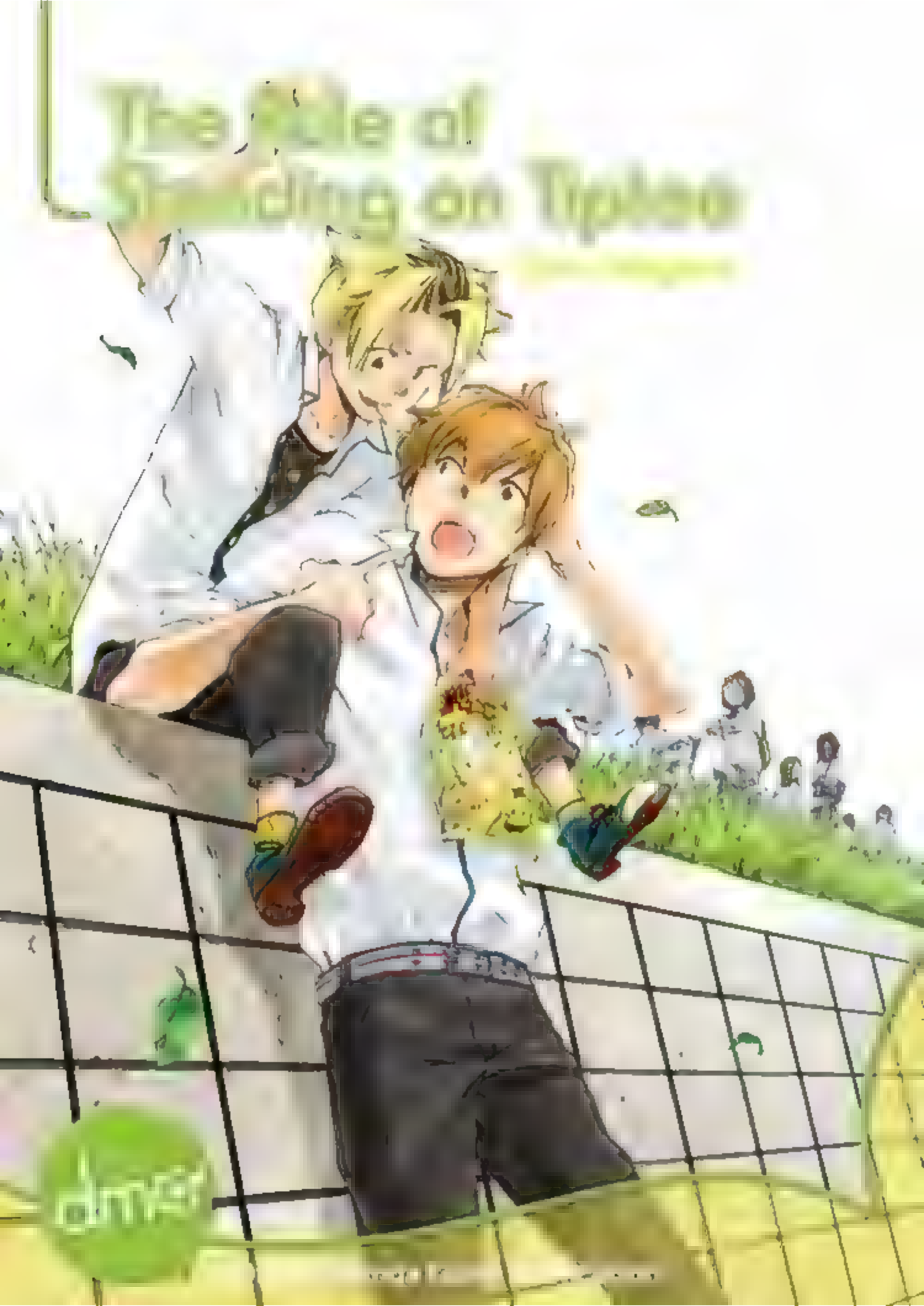
I'M NOT THE SAME PERSON I WAS BEFORE.

WHAT THE HELL? JUST BECAUSE YOU HAD AN AMAZING GROWTH SPURT...!

AH HA HA. THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.

YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED.


Haa!


The Tale of
Standing on Tiptoe

CRAP!
DASH
CRAP!
DASH
DASH
DASH
The Rule of Standing on Tiptoe
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ...
You're so tiny I didn't even notice you were missing.
...ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE SEMESTER.
Huh huh
Why aren't there any hot girls around?
IF I HAVE TO RUSH TO SCHOOL, I WISH I'D AT LEAST BUMP INTO SOMEONE GOOD ON THE FIRST DAY...
...LIKE A NEW FEMALE STUDENT EATING A PIECE OF BREAD.
Hey!
Ooh!
DAMN IT!
I HAVE THREE MINUTES TO GET TO SCHOOL OR I MIGHT AS WELL GIVE UP.
PANTY SHOT! ♪
PANTY SHOT! ♪

WAAAAAAAA
THUD
BAM
I THOUGHT THIS KIND OF THING ONLY HAPPENS IN MANGA. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
Panty Shot
THIS IS NOT WHAT I HAD IN MIND!
KOTTON
...
OH!

FLUTTER
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? PUT ME DOWN!
WHOA!
JUST 'CAUSE YOU'RE BIGGER THAN ME...
FLUTTER
HUH
ひょい
?!
FWIP
CAN YOU GET UP?
CLENCH
YOU...
AH!
!
CLINK
AH!

AH!
BLUE EYES!
WAH! WHERE DID MY SUN-GLASSES GO?
Too bright!
WHAT? OH.
HERE.
I hope they're not broken
I'M GLAD YOU'RE ALL RIGHT, TOO.
THANKS!
WELL, I'M IN A HURRY.
Later!
HUH? WAIT!

AUGH!
Two minutes left!
HEY!
YOU!
GIVE...
LATE!!
GIVE ME A RIDE!!

...MY HAIR WILL GET FRIZZY.
IF THEY DON'T TURN THE A/C ON SOON...
HAH!
CHATTER
'Mommy'
It's been a while
'MORNING...
...
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS PICK ON ME?
MAYBE YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH ME.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, KAZUYA?
YEAH, IT'LL BE A PROBLEM IF THIS HEAT MELTS YOUR BRAIN AWAY.
CLACK
I'M HERE!
Hah
Hah
TOO LATE!
He loves to be late...
THAT KID!
NOT KOSUKE AGAIN
HERE!
ATTENDANCE CHECK! TAKE YOUR SEAT.
OH, RURI! I MISSED YOU!

COME ON, SENSEI. I TOTALLY MADE IT. GIVE ME THAT ATTENDANCE BOOK. I'LL MARK IT FOR YOU.
OKAY, I GOT IT. TAKE A SEAT!
Victory!
Stupor
BEFORE WE BEGIN HOME-ROOM...
...LET ME INTRO-DUCE A NEW STUDENT
I'M RAKU KUNUGIYA. NICE TO MEET YOU!
HEY!
CHATTER
Is he taller than Kazuya?
HIS EYES ARE BLACK NOW.
HUH?
CHATTER
Wow! He's huge!

"AH!"
I SWEAR...
.. HIS EYES WERE BLUE THIS MORNING.
After school
... ...
KOUKAI
HOW TALL ARE YOU?
ABOUT... 5'11" NOW.
YOU HAVE A COOL NAME. HOW DO YOU WRITE IT IN KANJI?
TAKOSHI FOR "ENJOYABLE."
...
HOW ABOUT A TOUR OF THE SCHOOL, RAKU-KUN?
SO WHAT? OUR KAZUYA CAN COOK ON TOP OF THAT!
KOUKAI
KOUKAI
HE SAYS 5'11", KOSUKE-CHAN.
I won!

RAKU-KUN?
OH, A TOUR?
THANKS, BUT...
...THIS LITTLE GUY GIVE ME A TOUR.
I'LL HAVE ...
AUGH!
You think you can judge everything by hair
He's right
You can't judge someone by height
...
WHAA-
-AAAT?!
PUT ME DOWN! NOW YOU'RE KIDNAPPING ME? AND YOU CALLED ME A LITTLE GUY!
Boo!
Boo!
He's really tiny when you look at him from that angle
Be more sympathetic
SO YOUR NAME IS KOSUKE.
WHAT ARE YOUR KANJI?
KO FOR "PUBLIC" AND TASUKERU FOR "HELP."
I WON'T RUN SO LET GO OF MY HAND!

Semin isn't here
Oh?
...? HOW DO YOU KNOW WHERE IT IS?
I haven't really been here before
It's nice and cool
I WAS HERE A FEW TIMES OVER THE SUMMER.
I'M NOT LIKE THAT!!
HAM-CHAN, HUH?
WHERE ARE WE GOING?
THE INFIR-MARY!
Band-Aid, Band-Aid~
WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE?
What a weird poster
HMM?
FOR THIS.
...
HIS EYES ARE BLACK.
Oh, you're right
DIDN'T YOU SCRAPE IT THIS MORNING?
I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT SO TAKE A SEAT.

The smell of disinfectant
MY AMER-ICAN MOTHER ...
...NAMED ME RAKU...
FROM THE ENGLISH WORD FOR "LUCK."
CLINK
WELL ...
SIT DOWN
I'VE NEVER SEEN COLORED CONTACTS BEFORE!
JUST SIT.
Disinfectant
OH...
ARE THEY COLORED CONTACTS ?
I'M...
...ONLY HALF JAPA-NESE.

AH!
Wow!
WHAT?!
YOU'RE WEARING COLORED CONTACTS NOW!
YOU THOUGHT MY BLUE EYES WERE CONTACTS?
Don't get up.
MOST PEOPLE WOULD.
Half...
...
How do things look through them?
How much were they?
DEPRESSED
SO I COULD HAVE TOLD EVERYONE I WAS WEARING CONTACTS.
UH... I GUESS HE'S RIGHT.
How cool!
Wow!
GH-
CHILL OUT!
EEEK!
LET ME SEE THEM! COME ON, JUST FOR A BIT! I'LL RETURN THEM RIGHT AWAY!

LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE.
...
Will he look like a cat with one contact?
WAH, I'M BEING MOLEST-ED!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
BUT WHAT'S THE POINT OF YOU WEARING BLACK CONTACTS?
OH, RIGHT
NEVER MIND.
Let's go back to class
WHAT? HEY!
WAIT UP!
DON'T TELL ANYONE...
...THAT I'M HALF JAPANESE!

I'M PART JAPANESE, BUT I WAS BORN AND RAISED IN JAPAN.
I MAY NOT LOOK JAPANESE,
Speak Japanese, please!
Where's the station?
Huh?
Map
BUT I'M NOT CHRISTIAN AND I CAN'T SPEAK ENGLISH.
AND EVERYTHING DOESN'T LOOK BLUE WITH THESE EYES.
My parents won't let me marry a non-Japanese person
But I'm a Japanese atheist
I NEVER GOT BULLIED, BUT I FELT LIKE THE ODD MAN OUT.
I'LL BECOME JAPANESE IN MY NEW SCHOOL!
I dyed my blond hair, too!
CLENCH
It isn't easy being a super hero. They're concerned about our health, too.
Don't forget your lunch!
CLENCH
...YOU FOUND OUT MY SECRET ON MY FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.
I can't believe we're in the same grade.
SO DON'T TELL ANYONE.
Don't call me Ham!
OKAY, HAM-CHAN?
Since I was running late that morning-
I put on my contacts at school
I MEAN WHY ARE YOU SO SELF-CONSCIOUS ABOUT THIS?

YOU'LL ALWAYS BE HALF JAPANESE.
YOU'LL GET CAUGHT IN A LIE RIGHT AWAY.
WELL ...
WHAT? YOU MORON!
BUT CAN YOU SAY YOU DON'T WEAR PLATFORM BOOTS FOR HEIGHT?
THAT'S TRUE,
How stupid
Hmm...
I KNOW, BUT...
ANY-WAY...
...YOU CAN'T CHANGE WHAT MOTHER NATURE GAVE YOU.
FIRST IMPRES-SIONS ARE IMPORTANT.

WHAT?
...HOLD A GRUDGE AGAINST YOUR PARENTS?
DO YOU...
THEN BE PROUD OF YOURSELF.
NO WAY!
MY PARENTS ARE THE BEST!
DORK.
HMM?
WELL, JUST DON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT YOUR ETHNICITY, RIGHT?
I COULDN'T CARE LESS.
Uh...
You don't care...
I see
WHAT?

WHAT MAKES YOU GROW SO TALL?
WHAT I'M CURI-OUS ABOUT IS...
ZOOM
PFFT!
OKAY, I'LL TELL YOU THE SECRET.
EXCITED
YEAH?!
You are conscious about your height!
SHUT UP!!
BWAA HA HA HA HA!

"YOU CAN'T CHANGE WHAT MOTHER NATURE GAVE YOU."
I HEARD THIS FROM SOMEONE
UH-HUH.
IT'S NOT THE SAME!
I'M STILL GOING THROUGH A GROWTH SPURT!
HEAD BUTT
WHOA!

WHAT?
At school?
YOU WEAR SUNGLASSES?
I GET A HEADACHE FROM... TOO MUCH SUNLIGHT.
UM... YEAH.
HEY, RAKU.
FLINCH
YES, YOU HAVE A LIGHT COMPLEXION!
AND YOUR HAIR LOOKS GORGEOUS IN THE SUNLIGHT!
It's true!
IS IT POSSIBLE YOU HAVE SOME FOREIGN BLOOD?
YOU MAY BE MORE SENSITIVE BECAUSE OF YOUR LIGHT SKIN TONE.
They say UV rays are bad for our eyes!
OH, REALLY?
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN I BOUGHT A PAIR THIS YEAR, TOO.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
...

HEY, YOU.
Really? I'm surprised
...
I'M REAL BAD AT ENGLISH, TOO!
ARE YOU KIDDING ME?
WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME TO MY DAY DUTY JOB?
Checking out extracurricular activities.
HMM?
Give me a hand
HUH?
WHAT THE HELL? YOU'RE JUST AFRAID I'LL BLOW YOUR COVER.
Forget it
I'm done.
WHY DON'T YOU FORGET ABOUT IT IF IT STRESSES YOU OUT?
IT'S BECAUSE I FEEL AT EASE WHEN I'M WITH YOU.
I GUESS ...

BUT IT'S ALSO LIKE BEING A SUPERHERO IN DISGUISE, SO IT'S COOL IN A WAY.
IT'S STRESS-FUL.
I KIND OF IDOLIZE THEM.
Or like a girl disguising herself as a boy in an all-boys school
LET'S SAY YOU LOOK LIKE A KID, BUT YOU HAVE THE INTELLIGENCE OF AN ADULT.
DON'T YOU GET IT?
Here, hold this.
OKAY...
WHAT?
REALLY?!
SO, THEN...
YEAH ...
...I GET IT.
...
COMMON DESTINY!
YOU'RE ONE OF A FEW FRIENDS WHO KNOWS MY SECRET!

I AGREE!
RIGHT?
KOSUKE!
CLATTER
CLATTER
NO WAY.
...
...
OH, I HAVE NO IDEA.
HE'S SURPRISINGLY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT IT.
WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT HOW RAKU-KUN DOESN'T LOOK FULLY JAPANESE.
HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT IT?

HEY, MINAMI.
stop slouching
WHY ARE YOU DRAGGING YOUR FEET?
PLAYING VIDEO GAMES LATE AT NIGHT AGAIN?
BUT I'M SLEEPY IN THE MORNING.
BLAH.
UGH, I HAVE GYM FIRST TODAY.
I'M NOT TELLING YOU BECAUSE YOU'LL SPOIL THE GAME.
I WON'T SHRINK.
SO HOW FAR DID YOU GET... ...in Dragon Quest?
WHAT IF YOU GO BLIND AND SHRINK EVEN SHORTER?
DASH
YOU TOLD ME WHO WOULD DIE IN THE MOVIE THE OTHER DAY!
SHUFFLE
SHUFFLE
I WON'T DO THAT ANYMORE! WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO LET GO OF THE PAST?
It was a few years ago!

WHAT ARE THEY DOING?
うおおお
RAAH
WOW.
WHOOSH
I'M ON THE VOLLEY-BALL TEAM!
I'M IN BETTER SHAPE THAN YOU!
WHOA!
KOSUKE !!
HELP!
HELP!
ARGH
THEY GET ALONG WELL.
THOSE TWO...
What are you doing?
Can you get up?
HMM?

OH, THEM.
THEY USED TO DATE EACH OTHER.
BUT THEY BROKE UP RIGHT AWAY.
HMM, THEY MAKE A GREAT COUPLE.
DON'T YOU AGREE?
I THINK THEY'RE MEANT FOR EACH OTHER.
..ON THEIR FIRST DATE...
BUT THE REASON THEY BROKE UP WAS...
THIS..DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT.
NO.
Height differences can wear you out
That cracks me up!
HA HA HA
HA HA HA
..SO THEY SAID.
REALLY?
...
HAS ANYONE EVER TOLD YOU THAT YOU HAVE A BIG MOUTH?

Bwahaha
AH.
THAT ASS-HOLE!
LIO
...
First Period
Gym
THAT'S WHAT I HEARD FROM HIM.
IS IT TRUE?
SORRY, BUDDY.
I WON'T ASK IF YOU DON'T WANT ME TO. SO DON'T BE UPSET.
Hothead
AH!
LIO
ANY-WAY...
TWEET TWEET
Next group!
HOW COULD HE BREAK UP WITH SUCH A PRETTY GIRL SO EASILY?
MAYBE HE DOESN'T GET EXCITED BY GIRLS.
Argh!
Wow!
AH!
GRASP

DOES THIS EXCITE YOU?
YOU'RE KIDDING ME, RIGHT?
LET'S START
UH, WHAT IS IT?
I DON'T MIND TALKING ABOUT MINAHL BUT DON'T ASK HER ABOUT IT.
SHE MAY NOT LOOK IT, BUT SHE'S SURPRISINGLY SENSITIVE.
Yeah, I want to slam dunk!
That's a penalty!
OKAY.
SHE'S FINALLY IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE ELSE NOW.
You can tell by her attitude.
HE REALLY CARES ABOUT HER.

Golden Hamster
Golden Ham Style
...
ARE YOU KIDDING? I THOUGHT YOU LIKED BEING A HAMSTER!
DON'T CALL ME HAM!
Don't worry!
Kuh.
Ruh
STOP BEING ANGRY, HAM-CHAN.
I CAN'T HELP BUT BLURT OUT WHAT'S ON MY MIND WITH HIM.
I'm sorry! I'm sorry!
...
Grr...
WHAT'S WITH YOU GUYS?
HAM-CHAN
HAM-CHAN.
JEEZ, HAM-CHAN.
WELL, THAT'S WHAT HAM-CHAN TOLD ME.
WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE HAVING FUN, HAM-CHAN.

RAKU
LUCK
LUCKY
I'LL CALL YOU LUCKY!
DAMN IT! I'LL... I'LL...
OKAY.
WHAT?
Hear that? Lucky! Lucky!
Yeah
"Raku" is kind of hard to pronounce
Isn't it embarrassing to be treated like a dog?
YAY!
Stretch or Chestnut?
Okay, Tower
Gets wet, named right away
YOU'RE BEING SARCASTIC.
NO ONE HAS EVER GIVEN ME A NICKNAME BEFORE.
And my last name sounds stiff
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED ONE.
Don't point your finger at me.
OKAY.
FROM NOW ON, INTRODUCE YOURSELF AS LUCKY!

THE REST OF MY LIFE?!
Not pointing his finger.
FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE, SAY, "BRILLIANT, GORGEOUS, AND GLAMOROUS! RAKU KUNUGIYA, THE LUCKY STAR, ALSO KNOWN AS LUCKY!"
WHY SHOULD I?!
Out looking to copy, isn't it?
THEN WHEN YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF, FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE YOU SHOULD SAY, "MODEST, SPEEDY, AND METICULOUS! I'M HAM-CHAN THE YOUNG, GENTLE HAMSTER PRINCE OF HAMSTER LAND!"
WHAT ON EARTH ARE THEY DOING?
Let's have lunch.
I'LL GET REJECTED WHEN I APPLY FOR JOBS, TOO!
GET REAL! I CAN'T WIN OVER GIRLS WITH AN INTRODUC-TION LIKE THAT!

NOW...
.. FACE EACH OTHER.
READY...
HERE YOU GO.
CHILL OUT, GUYS.
OKAY, OKAY.
GO!
...?
HOW ABOUT...
...THE LOSER WILL INTRODUCE HIMSELF AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT CLASS.
It would be too hard to do for the rest of her life.
WHAT?!
No, it's reality!

COMEDIANS ARE POPULAR THESE DAYS.
I THINK BEING FUNNY IS IMPORTANT FOR POPULARITY.
YEAH! IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE A KNACK FOR HUMOR, AND...
...GIRLS MIGHT LIKE IT...
...IF IT WORKS.
BUT, WAIT ...
YOU'RE CREATING MORE PROBLEMS. GO AWAY!
WHAT?
IT MIGHT WORK.
...
OKAY! I HAVE NO CHOICE! I'LL GIVE IT A SHOT!
Come on! Bring it on!
PFFT
HE'S SO GULLIBLE!

MAYBE, MAYBE NOT.
FEELING CONFI-DENT?
GET IN POSI-TION.
OKAY.
ARM WRESTLE, HUH?
IT'S BEEN A WHILE.
HMM.
STRETCH
STRETCH
I MEAN BUSINESS NOW.
?
OKAY.
THE HEIGHT DIFFER-ENCE MAKES IT HARD
READY...

SLAM
AGH!
I
GO!
WH-WHAT DID YOU JUST DO?
NICE GOING, KOSUKE.
I won!
HE USED TO BE A VOLLEY-BALL PLAYER.
I did it!
Yeah!
AW!
KO-SUKE WINS!
ALL RIGHT!

Hee hee hee
IN ANY CASE, YOU HAVE TO TAKE YOUR PUNISHMENT.
AH! That's right!
HE USED TO PLAY VOLLEY BALL
WHAT?
...
What about gestures?
Let's make him cue cards
5TH PERIOD JAPANESE HISTORY
SENSEI!
YES?
THE NEW STUDENT?
OKAY.
LET'S START FROM PAGE 84!

I'M ...
I'M...
YEAH.
BRILLIANT, GORGEOUS, AND GLAMOROUS! I'M RAKU KUNUGIYA, THE MOST TALKED ABOUT COOL GUY, YOUR LUCKY STAR, YOUR SHOOTING STAR, AND A NICE GUY ALSO KNOWN AS LUCKY!
BURST
UH ...
OKAY ?

I'M MODEST, SPEEDY, AND METICULOUS! THE YOUNG, GENTLE STAR FROM HAM LAND WHO WILL GROW TO BE A LION! I'M HAM-CHAN, THE HAMSTER PRINCE!
SEN-SEI!
EEP!
CLUNK
Ha ha ha! What was that?!
You're awesome!
I love it!
...!
FIDGET
FIDGET
IT BE-CAME A TREND FOR A WHILE
Sensei! I was lost in time forever...
...wait...!
Ha Ha Ha Ha
Raku-kun is adorable!
Bwa Ha Ha Ha
Come on!
LISTEN TO ME!
HAM-CHAN...
...stood up for me!
Have you decided?
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT JOINING A CLUB?
HEY, YOU!
EXTRACURRICULARS
WHAT HAPPENED TO MY NICKNAME?

ARE'NT YOU GOING TO CALL ME BY IT?
UH...
Damn, it's embarrassing to say
WHAT ABOUT CLUBS ...
LUCKY?
WHAT THE HELL?! UGH!
WHAT ABOUT CLUBS?
LET'S SEE.
See you tomorrow!
Bye!
I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.
I CAN'T MOTIVATE MYSELF.
BESIDES, WE'RE HALFWAY THROUGH THE YEAR.
I WOULD'VE CONSIDERED THE SAME CLUB AS YOU.
WHY?
HEY, CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
WHY DID YOU QUIT THE VOLLEYBALL TEAM?

HOW LONG DID YOU PLAY FOR?
I FORGET.
WHO KNOWS?
GRR...
SIX YEARS.
UM.
THAT'S FOR ME TO DECIDE.
TAP
TAP
OH,
JUST SHUT UP!
YOU MUST HAVE BEEN REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT IT. WHAT A WASTE!
Six years? You mean since elementary school?!
HUH?
WAIT!

Really.
WHY DID YOU QUIT?
NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
BUT I WANT TO KNOW!
WHAT WAS YOUR REASON?
Come on!
EXAMS? AN INJURY?
Tell me!
...
IRRITATED
...volleyball!
We're talking about ...
CAN'T YOU TELL JUST BY LOOKING AT ME?!
NOPE!
DON'T MAKE ME SAY IT...
WAS IT BECAUSE OF YOUR HEIGHT?
YOU MORON!

CHOMP
OW!
.. BECAUSE OF SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO GIVE UP...
JUST JUMP IF YOU CAN'T REACH THE NET.
YOU'RE SHORT. SO WHAT?
DON'T JUST SAY WHATEVER YOU WANT!
THERE ARE SOME THINGS I CAN'T REACH NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY!
YOU DON'T KNOW SHIT!

WHACK
WHACK
Stop it!
WHACK
WHACK
OH ...
UH, KOSUKE? WEREN'T WE GOING TO KARAOKE AFTER SCHOOL ...?
Ooh
HEY, CUT IT OUT!
Yahh!
Yahh!
WHACK
WHACK
FORGET ABOUT THIS LOSER. LET'S GO, KEIKA!
UH, OKAY.
COULDN'T YOU HAVE STOPPED HIM SOONER?
WHAT STARTED THIS?

What's the matter?
Are you all right?
Yeah.
I MADE HIM UPSET AGAIN.
He left a bite mark
OH!
THEY'RE PRACTICING.
LET'S SEE.
VOLLEY BALL.
VOLLEY BALL.
WOMEN ARE ON THE FIRST FLOOR.

I DIDN'T KNOW SHE WAS ON THE VOLLEY-BALL TEAM.
Too bright
-to see anything
IT'S MINAMI-CHAN
HMM?
...
"BUT THEY BROKE UP RIGHT AWAY."
"THEY USED TO DATE EACH OTHER."
...
Hmm.
I NEED TO APOLO-GIZE.

HEY, RAKU.
OH!
SEN-PAI!
NO, I SHOULD TELL HIM IN PERSON.
SHOULD I SEND ..
A TEXT MESSAGE ?
FACE
FACE
Umm
Umm
WHAT? IS THAT HOW IT LOOKED?!
ARE YOU SNEAKING PICTURES OF THE TEAM?
Yes, it was
OMMY
I was just passing by!
NO... NO!
HERE FOR A VISIT? THE BOYS TEAM IS UPSTAIRS. I'LL TAKE YOU THERE.
HE'S ALWAYS ANGRY.
He doesn't grow because he sweats the small stuff
I don't know
HEY, HOW DO YOU THINK I SHOULD APOLOGIZE TO HIM?
Wasn't he with you?
WELL, I KIND OF UPSET HIM.
BY THE WAY, WHERE'S KOSUKE?

HE'S SO SIMPLE.
You know him well
AND FOOD IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHOD!
HA HA HA. DON'T WORRY. IF IT WASN'T SERIOUS, HE WON'T EVEN REMEMBER IT TOMORROW.
YEAH, KEIKA AND KAZUYA, TOO.
HE HASN'T CHANGED SINCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.
SO IT'S PROBABLY BETTER TO APOLOGIZE TO HIM TODAY.
YOU'VE KNOWN HIM SINCE THEN?
THAT'S A LONG TIME TO KNOW SOMEONE.
"YOU DON'T KNOW SHIT!"
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL...
BWA HA HA!
SO WHAT?
...
WOW, SENPAI!
I NEED TO GET SOME SUNFLOWER SEEDS TO BRIBE HIM.
THANKS, I'M GONNA HEAD OUT NOW.

SQUEAL
SINCE WHEN?
YOU'RE LUCKY! HE'S CUTE! ♡
OH, MY GOD! IS HE YOUR BOY-FRIEND?
THEN INTRO-DUCE HIM TO US!
SQUEAL
SQUEAL
ACK!
WHAT? REALLY?
HE'S NOT MY TYPE AT ALL!
SHE DISSED ME... publicly
MY BOY-FRIEND? NO WAY! HA HA HA!
GET LOST, MORONS!
Butch girls?!
I'M NOT INTER-ESTED IN BUTCH GIRLS!
FWIP
FWIP
MENACING →
SNEAK
GOTTA GO!
GRAB
UGH!

YOU KNOW IT FELT GOOD.
Nmph
ABOUT TO PASS OUT! I COULDN'T BREATHE!
Watch it regular!
Hey!
Yeah, a little bit
AHH!
I WAS ...
I CAME BACK BECAUSE I REALIZED HOW IMMATURE I WAS ACTING.
You had grit all over you
...?
...
SO WHAT?
THAT'S IT?
SORRY! THANKS!
AND SORRY!
AHA HA, YOU'RE SO DUTIFUL!!
YOU CAME ALL THE WAY BACK HERE FOR THAT?
HUH ?!
DON'T LAUGH!
What are you saying?

THIS CYCLE OF UPS AND DOWNS OVER STUPID LITTLE THINGS...
I SAID, I'M SORRY.
FOR WHAT?
.. REMINDS ME OF...
THIS IS WHAT YOU WERE REALLY AFTER!
WOOHOO!
OF COURSE!
OH, MAKE THE NEXT RIGHT.
Everyone's at karaoke
THIS IS GREAT.
I COULD SLEEP IN FOR FIVE MORE MINUTES IF YOU'D PICK ME UP AT THE STATION IN THE MORNING.
NO WAY.
WHOA!
HEY! WATCH OUT!

HEE HEE!
THAT LOOKS NASTY!
IT HURTS!
THIS REMINDS ME OF LOVE.
WHAT?!
DO YOU WANT TO BITE MY RIGHT ARM, TOO?
"Food is the most effective method."
That reminds me

THERE'S RURI AND KAZUYA.
MAKITA. SHE LIKES LITTLE THINGS.
Meow
CLICK
DING
LARGE
SMALL
TINY
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL.
WOOOOW!!

Is that for dessert?
EAR OF CORN
...
RURI IMASATO. HER HOBBIES INCLUDE COUNTING THINGS...
One, two, three, four five, six
189...
190...
SLEEP-ING.
ZZZ
AND...

WINTER'S REALLY HERE.
HAA!
WHOOSH
SHUT UP! I'M IN A CHRISTMAS MOOD NOW THAT MY FINALS ARE OVER!
IT ISN'T CHRISTMAS FOR TEN MORE DAYS.
PURE
RELIEF
JINGLE BELLS!
JINGLE BELLS!
Spend Christmas Eve with you guys?
Let's play all night!
Don't tell everyone!
MINAMI DOES!
WII
Yah! Yah!
LET'S ALL PLAY WII ON CHRISTMAS EVE!
YOU HAVE A WII?
GOOD IDEA.

They're so syncronized!
WHAT!!
BUT HIS FRIEND PICKED CHRISTMAS EVE TO COME!
LUCKY HIM SPENDING CHRISTMAS EVE..
.. WITH A GIRL.
INHALE
I didn't think about it before
I GUESS HE'S RIGHT.
POPCORN
BUZZ
BUZZ
HMM?
YEAH, I'M HERE.
WHAT?
Who has the five of spades?
BEEP
HELLO?
HUH?

HAM-CHAN!
RAKU!
HEY, YOU LOOK FESTIVE!
HUH? I DO?
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FRIEND?
THERE'S NO CAKE LEFT FOR YOU.
SINCE I WAS SEEING MY FRIEND OFF...
SEEING YOUR FRIEND OFF...
HUSTLE
HUSTLE
POPULAR BOYS ARE DEDI-CATED
...I WANTED TO GIVE THIS TO YOU.
Rubbing it will make it worse.
I ASKED YOU A QUESTION!
YOUR RED NOSE! ♥

IT'S STUFFED WITH GOODIES. I HOPE EVERYONE ENJOYS IT.
WOW!
WOW!
EXCITED
EXCITED
TADA!
ANY-THING!
SOME-THING!
PAT
PAT
OH, NO, I'M HEADING BACK.
MINAMI'S HOUSE IS RIGHT OVER THERE.
WHAT?!
HERE'S A LITTLE SOME-THING IN RETURN!
HAND WARMER
THANKS

GOOD NIGHT!
THEN, WHAT...
MY TRAIN IS COMING.
COME ON! EVERYONE IS WAITING TO PLAY WITH YOU.
WHAT DID YOU COME HERE FOR?
...
? ?
THANKS FOR THE HAND WARMER.
OH!
PLEASE STAND BACK.
LINE TWO TRAIN IS ARRIV-ING.

I'M...
. SO STUB-BORN.
It's almost cold.
DID I WANT HIM TO STOP ME?
WHAT AM I THINKING?
HOW SELFISH.
CLICKETY
CLACK

EEK!
SHOVE
ICY
...WAITING!
RAKU!
SORRY TO KEEP YOU...
I THOUGHT MY HEART WAS GOING TO STOP!
SO ARE YOU ALONE?
YEAH, I INVITED EVERYONE, BUT...
HMM.
WE CAME TO VISIT A SHRINE ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.
AND MINAMI AND RURI ARE GOING TOGETHER.
...for me.
Go have fun...
KEIKA SAID HE CAN'T COME BECAUSE IT'S TOO COLD.
It's our chance to get away
KAZUYA SAID HE SPENDS THIS TIME WITH HIS FAMILY EVERY YEAR.
We usually have ramen on the way home.

SHOULD WE GO INSIDE SOME-WHERE?
I don't think so
not a big shrine
there are a lot of people
IT'S NOT MIDNIGHT YET.
...
ARE YOU SLEEPY?
3
JEEZ!
It's so cozy here
GOOD NIGHT.
WHAT?!

AN HOUR LATER
Oh no, we'll miss the last train!
NNNN
...
ZZZ
AH...
AAH!
...
DING-DING
HMM?
HEY, WAIT!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH THAT?
ALL RIGHT, I TOOK A PICTURE OF YOU SLEEPING!
SELL IT TO YOUR FANS!
SQUEAL
SQUEAL
DELETE IT!!

I was still up
I DIDN'T MISS IT!
WHAAT?!
Five AM
Do you realize what time it is?
I DIDN'T WANT TO MISS THE COUNTDOWN!
WHY DID YOU FALL ASLEEP, TOO?
BUT, RAKU!
I'LL SHOW EVERY-ONE THIS PICTURE OF YOU SLEEP-ING!
HEY, HAM-CHAN!
Al to Kurudeus!
THIS PLACE IS EMPTY.

I DON'T KNOW THE PROPER... PRAYER ETIQUETTE.
WHO CARES? IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE THAT COUNTS.
CLUNK
CLUNK
(YAWN)
BEING AT THE SHRINE AT THIS HOUR IS EXCITING.
HA HA!
IT'S PRETTY RARE.
WELL...

UM...
THERE'S.. SOMETHING I HAVE TO TELL YOU.
DON'T BE SO SERIOUS...
EMBAR-RASSING?
HUH?
Hang on
CLICK
CLICK
IT'S TOO EMBARRASSING TO SAY! I'LL TEXT YOU!
DELETE IT!!
That's even worse!
It's for personal enjoyment
WHAT THE HELL?
...
INBOX
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
1 ATTACHMENT
Don't worry I won't sell it. ★

I SLEPT THROUGH NEW YEAR'S AT MOC!
...WHEN I WOKE UP, IT WAS FIVE IN THE MORNING!
AND THEN...
OH?
OH, I THOUGHT IT WAS GOING TO BE SOMETHING MORE EXCITING....
WHY?
.. FROM THE WAY YOU LOOKED.
HUH?!
YAY!
WHAT'S UP?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
Listen to this, Keiko!
KOSUKE WENT TO VISIT A SHRINE WITH RAKU.
VISIT A SHRINE?

RELAX
'MORNING!
YEAH, YOU DID.
NO WAY!
UH, HOW DID I LOOK?
LIKE YOU'RE IN LOVE.
RIGHT, HINAMI?
Let me go!!
HERE, RAKU.
WHAT IS IT?
COME ON, GUYS!
HEY, TAKE A LOOK AT HIM, RAKU.
?
Cut it out!
Don't look!
OH, YEAH.

IT'S JUST LIKE A GIRL TO KEEP COOKIES IN A SCHOOL BAG...
SMOOTHLY
IT'S CUTE.
I want one, too!
THIS IS IN RETURN FOR THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING.
My snack!
OH!
THANKS!
Cookie
WHAT?
That must be how he gets girls.
YOU'RE SHALLOW!
COME ON!
PINCH
PINCH
I was complimented!
How nice.
YOU WOMANIZER!
Watch your mouth!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!
WHAT?

THAT WAS A GUY FRIEND.
I have a picture of him.
IS THAT SO?
WHAT? BUT ON CHRISTMAS...
Why are you whispering?
WHISPER
WHISPER
BUT DON'T YOU HAVE A GIRLFRIEND?
I'm being considerate!
NO, I DON'T.
Let's start homeroom!
LOOKS LIKE HE'S BACK TO BEING PALS.
I SEE.
I'll save this for when I'm hungry

...HE HAD A GIRL-FRIEND.
Keika made a stupid comment
I ASSUMED...
BUT I HAVEN'T EVER
PICTURED RAKU WITH A GIRL
WE NEVER REALLY...
.. TALK ABOUT THIS TOPIC.
I WANT A GIRL-FRIEND!
...ALL THE TIME.
KEIKA SAYS...

TOO FAR-FETCHED.
IT ISN'T.
I THINK...
...THEY'D MAKE A GOOD COUPLE.
IT'S CUTE
I WONDER WHAT...
...I LOOK LIKE RIGHT NOW?

HEY, HAM-CHAN.
LET'S CUT THROUGH THE PARK.
OKAY.
THERE'S A SWING SET!
HUH?
Hold my bag!
You get sick
a little
YOU DON'T GET SICK ON IT?
"You're shallow!"
I WONDER IF HE'S UPSET THAT I TOLD MINAMI-CHAN SHE WAS CUTE THIS MORNING.
DID HE THINK I WAS HITTING ON HER?

HAM-CHAN.
HMM?
I'll eat it now
OTEAK
OH, I HAVE A COOKIE.
...ABOUT THIS MORNING?
ARE YOU UPSET...
WELL...
CRUNCH
WHO? ME?
YOU SEEM TO GET ALONG WELL WITH HER.
MEH.

HONESTLY, I FEEL LIKE THEY PUT ME ON A PEDESTAL, AND IT MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE.
YOU SEE, I STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD, SO FROM THE BEGINNING...
Oh, sorry
Wow, he's tall!
Wow, he's cute!
Thanks
...MOST GIRLS NEVER SEE ME AS A FRIEND.
SO, I FEEL RELAXED AROUND MINAMI-CHAN.
And she said I'm not her type
I wish I had that problem
Girls first see him as a small animal
HMM, I SEE
I'll give that a try
...
This isn't that high
I AGREE, THAT YOU'RE NOT AS PRETENTIOUS AS YOU LOOK.
YEAH, EXACTLY!

WELL, HOW ABOUT YOU?
COME OVER HERE FOR A SECOND!
Stand next to me.
Laughing
VICTORY
DO YOU STILL HAVE FEELINGS FOR MINAMI-CHAN?
WHOA!
FLOP
GRAB

PAT
PAT
OKAY
MINAMI IS A FRIEND!
I TOLD YOU SHE IS IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE ELSE.
How dare you stand over me!
WATCH IT!
IT WAS BECAUSE YOU SAID SOMETHING STUPID!
HUG
Does that mean I'm a dependent guy?
IS THIS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE SPOILED?
PEOPLE DON'T USUALLY LOOK DOWN AT ME.
KUU!!!
EEEK!

WHOA!
WAIT..
...!
SORRY!
OWW...
DID YOU HIT YOUR HEAD?
I'M SO SORRY!
I'M SORRY!
HEY!
OKAY. ENOUGH MESSING AROUND.

?
OH, YEAH!
REMEMBER? I WAS RIDING MY BIKE THAT TIME.
OUR SITUATION IS REVERSED! THIS TIME, I GET TO LOOK DOWN ON YOU!
...OF WHAT HAPPENED WHEN WE FIRST MET.
IT'S THE OPPOSITE ...
...
I think you should go to the hospital
IT'S NOT TOO BAD!
YEAH.

HIS HOBBIES ARE BAKING AND KEEPING A JOURNAL ABOUT HIS HAMSTER
RATTLE
RATTLE
KAZUYA OHAMORI
I shared a sweet potato I baked yesterday.
Today. sunny.
He's full of energy today.
Okay, let's go play basket-ball!
He ate five pieces.
Wait, I need a break

Nap time in the afternoon.
ZZZZZ...
5TH PERIOD, JAPANESE HISTORY
HE WIPED THE DROOL OFF HIS FACE.
Gross.
Ah!
OH, HE'S UP.
BUT THAT'S WHAT'S SO CUTE ABOUT HIM, TOO. ♥
...
KAZUYA
Everyone loves him.
...
He eats and sleeps very well

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU'RE THAT KIND OF PERSON.
WHAT'S WITH THAT FACE?
HOW ABOUT A THANK YOU?
OKAY, OKAY.
I MADE THESE CHOCOLATES WITH RURI FOR VALENTINE'S DAY THIS YEAR. ♡
ICK!
Homemade?
Not you too!
GIRLS REALLY LOVE HOLIDAYS.
HERE.
ICK!
Here you go!
HOMEMADE, HUH?
But she's so clumsy
SHE JUST MELTED AND HARDENED THE CHOCOLATE, BUT I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.

Oh, thanks!
KAZUYA IS A MASTER BAKER.
REALLY?
POUND CAKE
WOW! IS THIS HOMEMADE?
I LOVE YOU!!
OH, COME ON.
DON'T THEY HAVE ONE FOR THEIR TRUE TARGET?
Have mine, too.
This is so cute!
Let's trade!
Wow, I want one, too!
BUT THE GIRLS IN OUR CLASS ARE UNAPPEALING.
2 TRADING FRIENDSHIP CHOCOLATE
ME EITHER.
WELL, I DON'T EXPECT ANYTHING ON VALENTINE'S DAY ANYMORE.

AFTER SCHOOL
COME ON!
LET'S GO.
Sheath
CLANK
CLANK
NOT YET!
THAT'S RIGHT! WE WON'T GIVE UP WHILE THERE'S STILL A CHANCE!
I'LL BUY YOU CHOCOLATES IF YOU WANT THEM SO BADLY.
RAH!
AWKWARD
THAT'S NOT THE POINT!
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WHEN MY SWEET SECRET ADMIRER IS SO SHY?
Hey!
You've got a lot of chocolate. I'll help you eat it!

HERE.
OH!
This guy was pretty popular
Girls like good cooks
YOU SAID YOU'D BUY ME SOME CHOCOLATE.
YOU DID!
WHAT?
A CHOCO-LATE BAR?
IMAGINE HOW A GUY FEELS BUYING CHOCOLATE ON VALENTINE'S DAY.
IT'S OKAY. IT'S STILL CHOCOLATE.
You ate yours!
Give me that one.
Kaziya's cake
THEN I'LL GRATE-FULLY ACCEPT IT...
My third chocolate that year
I CAN'T WAIT FOR WHITE DAY!
He even counted the one from a guy.
WHAT?!

I LOVE YOU, DEAREST RAKU!
HUG
I REFUSE!
Boo
Boo
...
WHAT A PAIN!
what's the difference
"I love you!"
THIS IS WHAT I GET FOR BUYING THEM CHOCOLATES?
WILL THIS GET ME OFF THE HOOK?
HUH?
!

WHOAAA!
Good idea! Hold this!!
Get a shot of this!
Hey!
!!
GRAB
I'LL DO IT, TOO, IF YOU'LL CUT ME SOME SLACK.

WE GOT THIS EXCLUSIVE SHOT.
It ended in failure, though.
LATER
What is it?
Huh?
HEY! I'M IN THAT PICTURE, TOO!
WAIT A MINUTE!
Take a look at this!
....
WHISPER WHISPER
I SEE!
IT'LL BE A BLOW TO RAKU'S POPULARITY IF WE SHOW IT TO THE GIRLS!

OH.
...MY CONTACT FELL OUT AND I FREAKED.
EARLIER, IN GYM CLASS..
I WAS, WASN'T I?
Hee hee hee
IS THAT WHY YOU WERE ACTING WEIRD?
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE STILL GETTING AWAY WITH IT.
WEIRD ACT
Covered with bangs.

UM...
...I'M A MAN OF HIS WORD...
PUFF
Hmph!
SURE! YOU CAN LET IT BE KNOWN THAT...
IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU.
WELL.
Eek!
Jerk!
BOY'S ROOM
WHY DO I HAVE TO DO THIS?
UGH.
WHAT A PAIN.
LIBRARY
HOURS
10:00 AM
12:00 PM

Okay.
.. BUT THIS IS HOW IT TURNED OUT!
THAT'S WHAT HE TOLD ME...
I CAN HELP YOU.
COLLECT MATERIALS AND WRITE A GROUP PAPER AFTER SCHOOL?
He's not a man of his word
...
OH, SORRY.
HANG ON A SEC.
COME ON, RAKU.
HELP ME OUT HERE.

NOW...
...DO YOU NEED A HAND?
GRR
WALK
WALK
THANKS. NONE OF THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS COULD COME IN TODAY.
OH, YOU HAVE TO LEAVE HERE BY SIX!
Since you're the last to leave, lock up that place. ♥
Really?
Ha ha
YOU CAN LEAVE THE REST.
Okay
I'M SORRY!
I'LL GIVE YOU A HAND, SO LET'S WORK ON IT NOW.
WHAT?
FORGET IT. I'M LEAVING.

By any chance...
...ARE YOU UPSET WITH ME?
ACK!
SMACK
SMOOCH
LOCK UP AFTER YOURSELF.
♡

CLACK
ガラッ
HEY, HAM-CHAN.
There you are.
Hee hee hee
HEY! WAIT A MINUTE!
CLICK
FOCK
HE'S TAKING A WHILE.
...
!!
My ears are still ringing.
THAT HURT!

It was my fault!!
...!
POP
SNACK
I'LL GO LOOK FOR IT!
FORGET IT!
Don't look
It's kind of embarrassing.
RAKU! YOUR EYE!
I LOOKED AROUND, BUT I COULDN'T FIND IT.
YEAH, I SEEM TO HAVE LOST ONE OF MY CONTACTS.
It'll be hard to hide when swimming starts anyway
...YOU DON'T MIND...
...TELLING EVERYONE ABOUT YOUR ETHNICITY?
DO YOU MEAN. .
YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S AMAZING THAT NO ONE HAS FOUND OUT YET.

WE WERE AROUND HERE, WEREN'T WE?
I'M GOING TO LOOK FOR IT!
UH...
YEAH.

IT HAS TO BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE.
It's going to dry up soon
THAT'S WEIRD.
WAIT.
DON'T MOVE.

I think so.
Does the key go to the office?
HERE.
?
THEY'RE REALLY BEAUTIFUL.
ACCIDENTALLY
OH!
I FORGOT.
MORON.
Ta-ri CLANK
THANKS.
THAT'S NICE OF YOU.
♥
HA HA HA.
Put in a good word for me.
YOU DON'T HAVE YOUR CONTACTS IN.
I'll return it

CREAK
WELL,
I'M NOT JUST DOING IT FOR YOU.
?
What did you mean earlier?
It's snowing!
BECAUSE I WANTED YOU ALL TO MYSELF.

HEH HEH!
WORKING HARD?
I PURPOSELY PICKED A STORE FAR AWAY FROM SCHOOL AND HOME. DON'T YOU HAVE SOMETHING BETTER TO DO?
Sorry, if I'm below 4'7"?
UNDER 4'11"?!
I'M SORRY, BUT WE HAVE HEIGHT RESTRICTIONS. WE DON'T ALLOW ANYONE OVER 5'11" OR UNDER 4'11" IN OUR STORE.
HMM? YEAH, I HAVE.
...over spring break!
No homework
SO YOU'VE BEEN WORKING PART-TIME?
I didn't know.
Don't be embarrassed
WE'RE ON SPRING BREAK!
WHY ARE YOU SO HYPER?
Leave me alone.

NOTHING TOO BIG...
Ice cream!
SO YOU'RE NOT SAVING UP FOR SOMETHING?
I WANTED SOME SPENDING MONEY.
OH, YEAH! COOL! THAT'S GREAT!
I style Minami's hair
VOCATIONAL?
GLOAT
once in a while
TO BE A BEAUTICIAN.
You bring a blow dryer to school
YOU THINK SO?
I WANT TO GO TO A VOCATIONAL SCHOOL AFTER HIGH SCHOOL.
I'M HOPING I CAN HELP PAY FOR MY TUITION.
THAT'S AWESOME!
YEAH.

I WONDER IF IT WAS HIS UNIFORM, BUT HE LOOKED PRETTY COOL.
It's our third year after all.
KEIKA SAID THAT?
REALLY?
CHATTER CHATTER
HEY, IT'S NICE TO BE COMPLIMENTED BY SOMEONE LIKE YOU.
FLIRTY
FLIRTY
BUY ME ICE CREAM!
Why?
I ONLY SEE THE FRIES RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME.
NO, YOU?
YEAH, IT DOES.
I KNOW.
DOES THE FUTURE SEEM VAGUE TO YOU?
I feel the same way
MOST PEOPLE AIM TO BE A CORPORATE BUSINESSMAN.
pretty cool?
HOW ABOUT YOU? HAVE YOU DECIDED YET?

I'm going to make the rounds!
STYLISH
I CAN PICTURE IT, BUT IT DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT.
LEAVE ME OUT OF YOUR FANTASIES!
BUT I CAN'T PICTURE YOU...
?
A new employee!
HMM?
The notebook he just bought
HEY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO MY NOTEBOOK?
LA...
QUÉ...
LA.Q?
HUH?
Tada!
FANCYING IT UP.

EVEN IF I BECOME A CORPORATE BUSINESS-MAN...
Ha ha ha! Nice!
I'm proud of it
RAKU!
AHA!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
...I HOPE...
How about "H&M" for Han?
...WE CAN HANG OUT LIKE THIS FOREVER.
Let's go to an arcade!
Ha ha ha
WHAT? DID I SAY SOMETHING STRANGE?
HA! WHAT A WEIRD THING TO SAY!
SMACK
AGH!

HAM-CHAN.
YOU SAID YOU'RE NOT SURE ABOUT THE FUTURE.
HMM?
HUH?
DRUMMING
BUT I'LL ALWAYS KEEP...
...ONE THING CLOSE TO MY HEART...
YOU KNOW, THAT.
Whoa! I dropped it! Stop messing around!
GAME OVER
Ha ha ha ha!
I hope so, too.
SUDDENLY OUR FUTURES SEEM LESS VAGUE.

...WHO MAKES A FUSS ABOUT WANTING A GIRLFRIEND, I'VE NEVER HEARD HIM TALK ABOUT ROMANCE.
someone
FOR SOME-ONE...
GAY?
WHAM
COULD HE BE...
...GAY...?
AHA!
LADIES ALL OVER THE WORLD WILL BE JEALOUS IF I HAVE A GIRLFRIEND.
DON'T BE SO SURE!
Let's go
YOU'RE NOT POPULAR BECAUSE YOU'RE A MORON.

...WILL BE AWARE OF OUR RESPONSI-BILITY AS UPPER-CLASSMEN...
WE THIRD-YEAR STUDENTS...
WHAT'S OUR RESPON-SIBILITY?
IS IT TASTY?
...BACK AT SCHOOL.
WOW...
WE'RE ALREADY ...
...
HE REALLY STANDS OUT IN A CROWD.
He's a giant.
CLASS A
Kosuke
Kazuya
CLASS B
Raku
Keika
Rui
Minami
CLASS D
OUR CLASS REALLY GOT SEPARATED.

HE STANDS OUT IN THE CROWD...
...with his blond hair
HAM-CHAN IS IN ANOTHER CLASS.
CLATTER
CLATTER
We needed the contact list
OH.
...?
RETURN TO YOUR CLASSES IN FIFTY MINUTES.
Dismissed!
WHAT WAS ALL THAT?
?? Is he napping?
HI!
OH.
YOU LOOK REALLY TALL UP CLOSE.
BUSTLE
BUSTLE
LOOK HOW HIGH HIS WAIST IS!
♥
HEY!

SORRY! ANOTHER TIME.
COME ON!
WHY NOT?
A...!
TMP.

HUH?
NOTHING SPECIAL.
...WHEN YOU WERE WAVING YOUR ARMS EARLIER?
IS THAT ALL? YOU WERE STANDING OUT, TOO.
I WAS SAYING THAT YOU'RE HUGE, AND I CAN SEE YOU FROM FAR AWAY.
Ha ha ha! You did
REALLY? DID I GIVE OFF A COOL VIBE?
WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO SAY...

WHAT?!
NO FAIR!
So will mine!
HA HA HA!
I BET MY GRADES WILL GO UP.
MY CLASS IS QUIET WITHOUT YOU.
I CAN SEE EVERYTHING CLEARLY, TOO!
THE CLASSROOM FEELS SO BIG WITHOUT YOU.
A QUIET
A BIG
CLASSROOM
YEAH.
YOU'RE IN A GOOD MOOD.

FLIP
HUP!
SMACK
WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
BUT SOMETHING IS MISSING
...
WHOA!
THUD
ACK!
HOP
FLUTTER
FLUTTER
What are you doing?

HMM...
YEAH!
HEY! THAT TICKLES MY NECK. GET OFF OF ME!
...!
GOT IT!
OH, SORRY...

FLUTTER
FLUTTER
...YEAH.
LIL, LET'S GET GOING!
BLUSH
SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAS HAPPENED BEFORE.
MY WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN TODAY

OH, MORNING, HAM-CHAN.
PAT
GOOD MORNING!
'Morning'
Good morning!
OH, YOUR BED HEAD?
THIS? IT'S MY BED HEAD.
MY EARS?
ERR, I MEAN...
YOUR HAIR!
Usual Self
YOUR EARS!
HEY, WHAT HAPPENED?
NORMAL
BED HEAD
THAT MEANS ...
...
Keika Kamioji, the Prince of Hair!
The Hair Fiend
But we're in different classes now
USUALLY, KEIKA WOULD FIX IT FOR ME.
THINGS ARE DIFFERENT NOW.

DON'T LAUGH!
Unbelievable!
UGH! NOT AGAIN!
YOU'RE STILL LAUGHING!
Don't move
VREEE
BUT I CAN'T STOP!
Enough already!
Just a little more
BUT HE'S HIS USUAL SELF.
. I WAS WORRIED OUR RELATIONSHIP WOULD BECOME AWKWARD.
AFTER YESTER-DAY.
(Just dying your hair) It's damaged
HEY, RAKU. IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE POPULAR AGAIN.
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE.
Yeah. SINCE THE OPENING CEREMONY, RIGHT?

GOTTA RUN!
Are you ignoring my kindness?!
IF THIS KEEPS UP, I'LL BE ALIENATED FROM ALL THE GUYS.
Can I make you look nerdy?
OKAY, I'LL HELP YOU BECOME LESS POPULAR!
ACK!
ROAR
ROAR
...
Give it back
...
ANY-WAY...
AM I THE ONLY ONE THINKING ABOUT IT?
I FEEL CONFUSED.
I'M GOING BACK TO MY CLASS.
THANKS.
KOSUKE
HEY, KOSUKE.

WHAT ARE YOU SO ANXIOUS ABOUT?
I SEE.
FLUSTER
IT'S...
NOTHING!
FLUSTER
WHOA!
CLATTER
HA!
...
THAT JERK.
HE LAUGHED WITHOUT A CARE IN THE WORLD
LIU-OH.
SEE YA!
TOOL
PONG
DING

PHYSICAL EXAM, HUH?
Physical Examination
I DON'T HAVE THAT MANY FRIENDS.
WHAT? DO I HAVE TO TAKE THIS BY MYSELF?
DAMN IT!
UM...
SOME OF THIS REQUIRES PAIRING UP...
Especially the fitness test
HMM?
DO YOU WANT TO WORK TOGETHER?

YEAH, UM...
I'M HANEHIKO.
CALL ME HANE.
Ack! We have to run a mile?
THIS MUST BE YOUR FIRST PHYSICAL EXAM AT THIS SCHOOL.
WE TAKE THE PHYSICAL EXAM AND THE FITNESS TESTS TOGETHER HERE?
CLUTTER CLUTTER
Changing Clothes
YOU'RE RAKU, RIGHT?
RIGHT.
...
I'VE BEEN...
...WANTING TO ASK YOU SOME-THING.
I hope I still have good eyesight
YEAH?
WHY...
...ARE YOU HIDING YOUR ETHNICITY?

WELL...
HA HA.
YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ALARMED.
I DON'T PLAN ON BLACKMAILING YOU OR THREATENING YOU FOR MONEY, SO YOU CAN REST EASY.
Why is that even crossing your mind?
REALLY?
I'M JUST CURIOUS ABOUT YOU.
I WON'T FORCE YOU TO TELL ME ABOUT IT.
AND I WON'T TELL ANYONE.
...
THAT'S A RELIEF.
HUH?
I'M GLAD IT'S SOMEONE LIKE YOU WHO FOUND OUT.

HA HA HA!
...!
...!
Just kidding
HE'S JUST TEASING.
CURIOUS ABOUT ME, HUH?
DO YOU WANT TO GO OUT WITH ME?
WHAT?!
AWW!
YOU'RE SO CUTE!
"I COULDN'T CARE LESS."
I THINK HAM-CHAN TOLD ME THE OPPOSITE
He he he
THAT'S SO LIKE HIM.
RAAA
KUUU!
SLAM
AGH!

THAT WAS MEAN!
IT SEEMED TO ME THAT YOU WERE DOING ALL THE GETTING.
GET HIM BEFORE HE GETS YOU!
WHOOSH
RETREAT!
HEY!
...
IT DOESN'T MEAN I DON'T TRUST YOU!
?
NO, WAIT!
YOU TOLD HIM...
...ABOUT IT?
WHAT?
I DON'T THINK HE'S THAT BAD OF A PERSON.
HE SAID HE WOULDN'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT MY ETHNICITY.
HE WAS ABOUT TO ATTACK ME!
HE LIKES TO GET IN MY FACE!
HE DOES?
HMM, BUT...
He called me a pipsqueak!
WHEN WE WERE ON THE VOLLEY-BALL TEAM...
SO THAT'S HOW THEY KNOW EACH OTHER

...?
...
WELL, HE ALREADY KNEW ABOUT IT.
はっ GASP
...HAM-CHAN?
HE SAW ME WITH MY MOTHER.
OH!
YOU KNOW...
I'M ALREADY EXHAUSTED FROM RUNNING AROUND EARLIER.
He's a weirdo.
LIM, THAT'S FINE, BUT DON'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN.
I'M WORRIED... ABOUT THE FITNESS TEST.
DO YOU HAVE TIME BEFORE THE EXAM? LET'S GO HAVE LUNCH.
IS THAT SO?

...
Do I have to climb the stairs to your classroom?
AH.
SHAME ON ME
GO! GO!
NOT SO FAST! NOW DO SOME BUNNY HOPS!
THAT'S ABSURD!
AHH!
DON'T PULL... ON MY NECK.
THUMP
THUMP
?
UH, HEY...
.. HANEHIKO WAS QUIETLY FUMING.
MEAN-WHILE...
He's a weirdo
Oh, it's the weirdo
THEY ALL HAD T-SHIRTS ON!
SQUEEZE
OKAY!
AGH!

"HE SAID HE WON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT MY ETHNICITY."
"HE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE A BAD PERSON."
RAKU'S WORDS HAVE BEEN BUGGING ME.
OH.
IT'S RAINING.
I KNOW HIM BETTER
I FEEL ROTTEN.
HUH?
OH.
THERE'S A SNAIL.
THE SUN WAS OUT EARLIER.
AND I'VE KNOWN ABOUT H.S ETHNICITY FOR A WHILE

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S CAUSING IT.
NO...
WHAT I MEAN IS I DON'T WANT TO SPECULATE ON IT.
HEY, IT'S RAINING!
WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH ME?!
WHY AM I SO DEPRESSED ?!
SO WHAT?!
SNAIL
GLOOMY
I WONDER WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO SIXTH PERIOD GYM CLASS.
YEAH.
...
I hope it's mine.
GLOOMY
I'M ALL DEPRESSED, BUT RAKU IS THE SAME AS ALWAYS.
I don't have my umbrella.
Uh-oh!
DAMN THOSE GUYS!
AH!

YOU'RE TOO BIG TO FIT UNDER MY UMBRELLA.
I DON'T WANT TO.
HUH?
WHAT'S WRONG?
I HAVE AN UMBRELLA, TOO.
CAN WE SHARE YOUR UMBRELLA AND GO TO THE STORE ON THE WAY HOME?
I'll buy an umbrella there
HAM-CHAN!
YOU KEEP A SPARE UMBRELLA HERE, RIGHT?
WAIT!
I JUST REALIZED WE WON'T GET WET IF WE WALK UNDER MY UMBRELLA LIKE THIS!
WHAT?!
THAT SOLVES THAT PROBLEM!

HOW CAN SUCH AN EVIL PERSON BUILD A FRIENDSHIP?
YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HIM.
YES, I DO!
WHAT?!
Hey now!
YOU KNOW,
WE'RE BUILDING A FRIENDSHIP HERE, SO CAN YOU GIVE US SOME SPACE?
ROAR
ROAR
ROAR
THE OTHER DAY, HE WAS KILLED BY THE FIRST GOOMBA ON THE FIRST LEVEL OF MARIO!
EEEP!
HE LIKES WEARING A BELLY WARMER TO STAY WARM IN WINTER!
C-CUT IT OUT!
MOVE ON TO ROUND TWO!
YOU PROMISED YOU WOULDN'T TELL!
Both of you!
Bwa ha ha ha
WHAT? FOR REAL?

You don't have one? Take this! I have two
I BORROWED IT FROM KEIKA.
WHERE DID YOU GET THAT UMBRELLA?
I told him to leave without me
Where's Hanehiko?
Extra
His umbrella
He's so cool.
Yeah.
That's how we should all be.
WANT TO SHARE?
...I WANT TO WATCH YOU PLAY MARIO.
ACK!
BUT FIRST...

I HAVE JUST AS MUCH RIGHT AS YOU DO TO HAVE LUNCH WITH RAKU.
WHY THE HELL ARE YOU HERE?
800 1-800
SHEESH!
No way!
You can have this
Why don't you go munch on sunflower seeds in the corner?
KAZUYA MADE SOME RED BEAN CAKES...
SO I BROUGHT SOME FOR RAKU.
What did you come here for?
I'M GETTING USED TO THIS, BUT IT STILL MAKES ME FEEL LIKE A THIRD WHEEL.

Yoo hoo!
HEY, MINAMI. WHAT'S UP?
HAVEN'T SEEN YOU FOR A WHILE, KOSUKE.
I came as a delivery for
WHAT HAP-PENED TO THE OTHER HALF?
HOLY CRAP!
FLAP
FLAP
I CAME HERE WITH RURI.
Me, too
Let me try!
HEY!
WOW!
Don't scare her!

Lucky them
THEY SEEM TO BE HAVING FUN.
WHY DON'T YOU GO PLAY WITH THEM?
I have allergies.
UH-OH. I BETTER GO.
I STILL HAVE TO READ SOME HOMEWORK.
HANE?
OKAY.
HMM?

There's a feather on you
HE WAS ON THE VOLLEYBALL TEAM, TOO.
Oh, that's right
WAIT, DO YOU KNOW HIM?
HE SAID HE HAS SOME HOME-WORK TO DO.
WHERE DID HE GO?
That was fun!
WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT?
You're so cool!
YOU CALL THAT A RIVALRY?
I GUESS HE STILL SEES KOSUKE AS HIS RIVAL.
MAYBE THAT'S WHY HE INSTIGATES FIGHTS WITH HAM-CHAN.
A Worthy Rival
A Rival in Love
Hmm
A RIVAL...
...HUH?
Well, who cares?

BY ANY CHANCE ..
I'VE BEEN WONDERING WHY YOU ALWAYS ARGUE WITH HAM-CHAN.
...
CHATTER
HEY, HANE.
CHATTER
YES?
...ARE YOU IN LOVE WITH...?
TAP
CAN YOU KEEP IT A SECRET?
SO ARE YOU...
...REALLY IN LOVE?

...HAS A BAD MOUTH AND IS DUMB, BUT ALSO KIND...
...CHEERFUL, ENERGETIC, PASSIONATE ABOUT EVERYTHING...
UHH-HUHH
...AND WILL EAT ANYTHING, TOO.
?
Yeah
THE PERSON I LIKE IS SWEET...
BE-CAUSE ...
FOR SUCH A TINY BODY...
...TALKING ABOUT HAM-CHAN?
La.Q
UM... ARE YOU...
TINY?
...Where does it go?
TINY...
FLOP

HE'S REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT IT.
OH, NO! SERIOUSLY, DON'T TELL KOSUKE!
embarrassed
SWEET, ENERGETIC, PASSIONATE, EATS WELL, AND...
TINY.
TINY!
TINY!
I'll wake you up when lunch is over.
HAM-CHAN IS A SPECIAL FRIEND TO ME.
HI, CAN I HAVE SOME MEDICINE FOR A HEADACHE?
YOU HAVE A HEADACHE?
THERE'S A BED OPEN. WHY DON'T YOU LIE DOWN FOR A BIT?
MAYBE I WILL.

...YOUR HEART STARTS POUNDING?
Don't get embarrassed
BLUSH
SIMPLY STATED, YES.
HE MUST BE REALLY INNOCENT.
It's just a handshake
WHEN YOU HOLD HANDS LIKE THIS...
SQUEEZE
ぎゅっ!
'Dumping Trash
HEY, HANE DO YOU MEAN LOVE AS IN...
...
WAS THAT...?
...
BUT I WAS FINE WHEN KEIKA APPROACHED ME!
IT'S NORMAL TO GET NERVOUS WHEN YOU'RE REALLY CLOSE TO SOMEONE, RIGHT?
That Day
A troop
Eye-Popping Valentine's Experience
HMM..
What was that?

HUSH!
SOMEONE IS SLEEPING!
OOPS, SORRY!
SENSEI! CAN I HAVE A BAND-AID?
ZZZ
ZZZ
RUSTLE
NO, I WAS LYING DOWN BECAUSE I HAD A HEADACHE.
BUT I FEEL BETTER NOW SINCE I TOOK SOME MEDICINE.
IN THAT CASE...
ARE YOU CUTTING CLASS?
HAM-CHAN?
HEY, IT'S YOU.
...?
THAT VOICE...
HEY!
WHOMP
WOOHOO!

HEY!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
I'LL DRAG YOU OFF THIS BED!
WHOA! I'M SERIOUSLY GOING TO FALL!
You'd need more than a Band-Aid if you did!
NO, I'M NOT. I BROKE MY KNEE.
Mwa Ha Ha Ha
THE BED IS MINE!
YOU BUM!
MACHIKO-SENSEI!
CLACK
The nurse's name
FLINCH!
Good night!
...!
Come on, senior!
HMM. WHERE DID I PUT IT?
IS YOUR NEWS-LETTER READY?
GHH!
SHEESH!

...
...
"WHEN YOU HOLD HANDS LIKE THIS."

...
I WONDER ...
... WHAT HE'S THINK-ING ..
...
UH...
THIS IS...
*3 CRACK
HAM-CHAN?
HEY...
...

HAM-CHAN?
THOSE MUST HAVE HURT.
...

HAM-CHAN, YOU BETTER GO BACK TO CLASS.
NAH.
I DON'T FEEL GOOD I'M GOING TO STAY HERE.
DING
DONG

I DON'T BLAME HIM.
"I DON'T FEEL GOOD."
I CAN'T BELIEVE...
..myself
RAKU?
Father
WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU LOOK PALE.
...
OKAY.
...
HANE ...
Can you get up?
I CAME TO CHECK ON YOU SINCE YOU HADN'T COME BACK YET.
MAYBE YOU SHOULD STAY IN BED.
NO, I'LL GO BACK...
BUT...

WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT?
He breathed in my ear
WHAT THE HELL?! WHAT THE HELL?!
Cutting Class
WHAT'S WITH HIM?!
WHA...
I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO MAKE SENSE OF ANYTHING FOR A WHILE NOW.
...

I...
SAY IT AGAIN.
WHAT? I COULDN'T HEAR YOU.
WOOHOO!
UH, I THINK I...
MUMBLE MUMBLE
UM, WELL...
YES? COME ON, YOU CAN TELL ME.
...LOVE HAN-CHAN.
.. HATE RAKU.

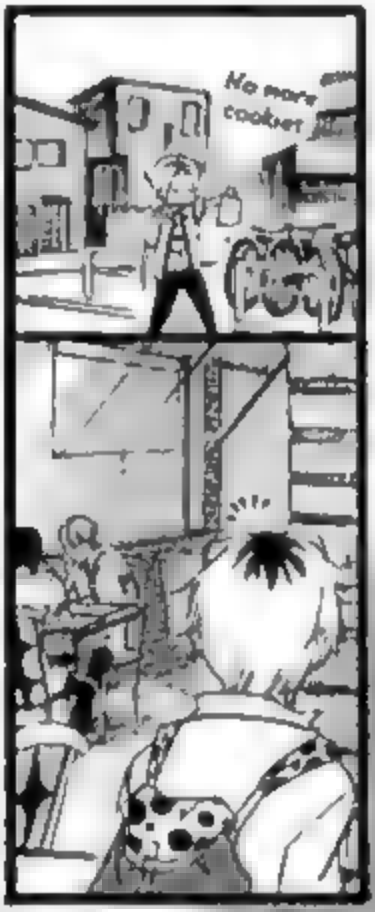
TOO HARD TO SAY!
HEY, HANHAM!
I'll think about it
WELL, CAN I ASK YOU FOR A FAVOR?
WHAT IS IT?
Don't just change my nickname
LOOK, RAKU! HONEY HAM!
HANE = HONEY
...
TADA
YOU'RE SO LUCKY!
YOU ..
THUMP
THUMP

WHAT?!
YOU TWO ARE SUCH GOOD FRIENDS.
BLUSH
OH, DO YOU REALLY THINK SO?
MORON! GET REAL! WHO WOULD BE FRIENDS WITH HIM?!
You must be blind!
IT'S OKAY, RAKU.
RAH
RAH
HE'S ALWAYS GIVEN ME THE COLD SHOULDER.
HEY, DON'T SAY THAT IN FRONT OF HIM.
HE'S BRAGGING ABOUT IT!!
SO I'VE BECOME A MASOCHIST!
THUMP
THUMP

THIS...
.. IS FOR RAKU.
PLOP
HEY!
WHY ME?
HE'S IN YOUR CLASS.
SHIK
LATER.
Thanks!
HEY, KOSUKE!
BAM
Dejected
NO GOOD, HUH?

CLUNK
UM, HANE.
IT'S ABOUT HAM-CHAN.
I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED.
HE'S BEEN LIKE THAT FOR A COUPLE WEEKS.
WHO KNOWS?
I'LL GIVE IT TO HIM.
I INITIALLY APPROACHED YOU SO I COULD INTERFERE WITH YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.
NONCHALANT
WHAT?
I KNEW HOW YOU FELT ABOUT HIM.
I'M SORRY.
I KNEW HOW YOU FELT ABOUT HIM, TOO.

CONFUSED
...
SO, DON'T FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE TO APOLOGIZE.
Are you shocked?
AH HA HA, BUT I WAS TAKEN ABACK BY HOW OBLIVIOUS YOU WERE.
HUH? WHAT THE HELL??
WE'RE RIVALS FROM NOW ON.
IT DOESN'T MEAN I'LL QUIETLY STEP ASIDE, THOUGH.


No more cookies!

He's hard to catch
...
BUT I WANT TO AT LEAST APOLOGIZE TO HAM-CHAN.
THE HARDEST PART HAS BEEN NOT SEEING HIM.

HOW DARE HE LAUGH?!
ACK!
CRAP, HE SAW ME.
4th...
...
NO, IT'S NOTHING.
?
...AH.
...

HOW...
...IGNORE ME?!
HE LOOKED AWAY SO AWKWARDLY!
IF THAT'S HOW HE FEELS..
STOMP
STOMP
FLINCH
...DARE HE...
SHARK
...
I AVOIDED HIM FIRST.
Nan-chan!
I CAN...
DASH
SNEAK

COOKIES!
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
I'm going home
Dejected
SLAM
CHARK
MUNCH
MUNCH
MUNCH
...
HUH?
THOSE ARE RAKU'S.
NOW WE'RE EVEN!
BWA HA HA! THAT'LL TEACH HIM!
Ate them all
CRUMPLE
Achoo!
Too much air conditioning?

SPLOSH
SPLOSH
SHAK
HAA!
I THINK SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH ME.
BLUSH
WOW.
RAKU ISN'T HERE.
I got called in for career guidance
YOU'RE REALLY AGITATED.
Ready For War!
HANEHIKO?!
THAT'S AN EXTREME WAY TO COOL OFF.

WELL. I'M PARTLY TO BLAME, TOO.
RAKU MADE THE SITUATION WORSE BY BEING NICE TO ME
SHOCK
ガーン
HE'S IN A BAD MOOD AS EXPECTED
Acting oblivious
I PICKED THAT UP FROM RAKU.
OH, SORRY.
HAM-CHAN!
WAIT A MINUTE.
WELL THEN, TAKE CARE!
That feels nice
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET PISSED ABOUT IT.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
...

YOU REALLY LOVE RAKU, DON'T YOU?
HELL NO!
I JUST DON'T HAVE A CLUE WHAT HE'S THINKING.
WHAT?
ACTUALLY...
I WAS WISHING HE'D...
SO...
...AND IT'S FRUSTRATING ME.
..FEEL AS DESPERATE AS I DO.
GRASP
IN THAT CASE..

HI, RAKU!
WHY DON'T YOU GO OUT WITH ME?
THE TEACHER IS WAITING FOR YOU IN HER OFFICE.
Next in line for career guidance
DRIP
びしょ
DRIP
びしょ
WHAT KIND OF CAREER GUIDANCE WAS THAT?!
UM, IS THERE ANY CHANCE I'M GOING TO GET SOAKED, TOO?
I don't want to go
NO, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY...

HUH?
KOSUKE'S RESPONSE WAS...
"NO CHANCE."
DON'T WASTE ANY MORE TIME OR I'LL MAKE KOSUKE MINE.
UH, I DON'T GET IT.
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'M GIVING UP ON HIM.
WHY AM I SUCH A NICE GUY?
Oh, man.
Man,
THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE.

WE CAME TO A FESTIVAL TODAY.
IT'S SUMMER BREAK ALREADY.
HANE GAVE ME A KICK IN THE BUTT, BUT THINGS ARE STILL AWKWARD BETWEEN HAM-CHAN AND ME.
I GOT ALL PSYCHED TO MAKE UP WITH HIM.
I SEE. I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED.
WHAT? HAM-CHAN CAN'T MAKE IT?
NOPE.
...
I JUST FOUND OUT ABOUT THIS.
HIS MOM IS IN THE HOSPITAL NOW.

...
STEAM
STEAM
"I'M NOT KIDDING."
Is that a new prank?
"HUH? WHAT THE HELL? GET REAL!"
...HE WAS IN LOVE WITH ME?
DOES THAT MEAN...
THEN WHAT DOES LOVE MEAN?
I ASSUMED HE HATED ME BECAUSE OF THE WAY HE ALWAYS ACTED
—I DON'T GET IT

DING DONG
FLINCH
...
THAT'S WHAT LOVE IS.
"IF THAT'S HOW HE FEELS..."
I'll ignore him, too!
WHEN YOU CAN'T KEEP SOMEONE TO YOURSELF.
YOU GET FRUSTRATED FROM A LACK OF CONTROL.
THAT SCARED ME.
YES?
OPEN THE DOOR!
HAM-CHAN?

I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
?
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FESTIVAL?
I'M GLAD YOU SEEM OKAY.
I HEARD YOUR MOM IS IN THE HOSPITAL.
IS SHE .. ALL RIGHT?
HOSPITAL?
YEAH, KEIKA TOLD ME ABOUT IT.
SHE'S NOT IN THE HOSPITAL.
SHE'S ON VACATION!
I'VE BEEN BUSY DOING STUFF AROUND THE HOUSE SINCE DAD WON'T DO ANY OF IT.

PHEW!
THANK GOD!
POM
KEIKA SHOULDN'T MAKE UP STORIES LIKE THAT!
Vaca-tion.
THAT JERK!
He went too far...
THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU SHOULDN'T JOKE ABOUT.
YOU KNOW,
va a-tion huh?
Ha ha ha
I was so worried
...

BLUSH
WHA...
WHAT?!
YAKI-SOBA...
...
GRAB
POW
I SMELL YAKISOBA!
HUH?
NO FAIR! I WANT SOME, TOO!
WHAT?

Who cares? You're an adult. Figure it out yourself
Dad, I'm going out.
What about dinner?
I JUST FOLLOWED HIM IN FROM OUTSIDE...
Yaki-toba,
Yaki-toba!
You aren't busy?
ARE YOU SURE IT'S OKAY TO GO OUT?
TOTALLY FINE.
He should jump through hoops sometimes.
SO TINY ..
I CAN'T BELIEVE THINGS WERE AWKWARD NOT TOO LONG AGO.
I wonder why
SINCE WHEN DID EVERYTHING...

I WANTED TO BE FRIENDS WITH YOU FOREVER...
...BUT THAT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE.
.. YOU'RE MOVING AGAIN?!
...
WHAT?
DON'T TELL ME...
IS THAT WHY YOU'VE BEEN ACTING WEIRD?
BUT I... WELL, I'M SORRY...
... ABOUT EVERY-THING.
...
BWA HA HA HA!
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

...FOR BEING STRONG ... AND HONEST ...
...AND FOR BEING MY SUNSHINE.
I LOVE YOU...
THAT'S WHY I CAN'T BE YOUR FRIEND ANYMORE.
BLUSH
...!
PAT PAT PAT
RUB RUB RUB
...

I KNOW THERE'S NO CHANCE.
HA HA. I'M SORRY.
I won't be moving away.
UM...
WELL,
UM, WAIT.
HUH?
WHAT WAS THAT?!
That?
WAHH!
GRAB
GRAB
PUH

SO...
YOU SEE...
I'M NOT SURE IF I LOVE YOU OR HATE YOU.
I THOUGHT KISSING YOU MIGHT HELP ME FIGURE IT OUT!
ARE YOU SURE?

UH, YEAH.
BECAUSE I LOVE HIM.
BUT I CAN'T STAY AWAY FROM HIM.
I GET FRUSTRATED BECAUSE I HAVE NO CONTROL OVER IT.

STOMP
STOMP
I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M LATE ON MY FIRST DAY OF THE SEMESTER!
DAMN IT!
CRAP! CRAP!
BAM
ROMP
HMMP THIS IS LIKE DEJA VU.
!!

WHAT'S THE DEAL?
Wow! It's real! Real blond hair!
WOW! WOW!
It's too bright
I really need my sun-glasses.
I THOUGHT I SHOULD CALL IT QUITS.
HEY, HAM-CHAN!
RAKU?!
Ouch!
Don't be silly! Moron!
We're gonna be late!
...SINCE YOU UNDERSTAND.
I DON'T CARE WHAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY...

RAKU?!
You look great!
Wow, what happened?
Hah hah hah
Ha ha ha!
SO YOUR HAIR IS NATURALLY BLOND.
Too perfect!
AND YOU QUIT WEARING CONTACTS, TOO.
Yeah, yeah!
WHAT?
YOUR MOM IS AMERICAN, RIGHT?
I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING SINCE YOU DIDN'T SEEM TO WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT.
You could tell they were contacts if you looked closely
Oh, her?
Her mom is American
Ienaga told us earlier
JUST ABOUT EVERYONE KNOWS.
It's your summer debut
Why didn't you tell us sooner?
NO... WAY.

UH, YEAH.
HAM-CHAN...
ARE YOU SURE?
....
What an orientation pair.
They're golden.
I feel bad.
I was being hostile toward Kamekichi over petty things.
IF I CAN'T REACH YOU ON TIPTOE...
...
ARE YOU DOING THAT... FOR VANITY?
Vanity
...
That
WHAT!
Ha!
YEOW!!

NO.
AND IT TASTES LIKE BLOOD.
I GUESS I DIDN'T HAVE TO DRIVE MYSELF CRAZY.
. THE SKY IS BLUE, SUMMER IS BRIGHT .
DING
DONG
See ya!
There's the bell.
AND EVERYTHING MAKES US HAPPY!
RIGHT NOW...

背のびの法則の法則

More of The Rule of Standing on Tiptoe

I HEARD YOU GUYS USED TO COME HERE OFTEN.
YEAH.
You're bad at all sports, huh?
ARE THESE YOURS?
YEAH, THANKS!

I didn't realize. Falling is a forbidden word
TRUE.
WE'RE TOO BUSY WITH EXAMS.
BUT NOT SINCE WE STARTED HIGH SCHOOL.

You changed your hair color back?
Yeah, I feel more comfortable with brown hair.
IT'S AUTUMN ALREADY.
OUCH!
First kiss tasted like blood.
NOTHING HAS PROGRESSED SINCE THAT DAY.
Ice skating! How nostalgic! Kazuya is really good
. SO I INVITED HIM ON A DATE.
THINGS HAVEN'T BEEN VERY ROMANTIC ..

HOW DID IT END UP LIKE THIS?
YOO-HOO!
RAKU!
WHOOSH!
Watch out!
I look bad
I'M SO JEALOUS
STOP CLINGING TO THE WALL.
YOU WON'T LEARN TO SKATE UNLESS YOU TRY IT.
WHOA! WAIT A MINUTE!

SEE YA LATER!
Goes in the other direction.
They're lucky
THIS IS HOW IT ALWAYS GOES.
THIS IS THE PART THAT MAKES ME SAD.
THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN WALK AROUND HOLDING HANDS.
PSHHH
WE'RE STILL NOTHING MORE THAN FRIENDS.

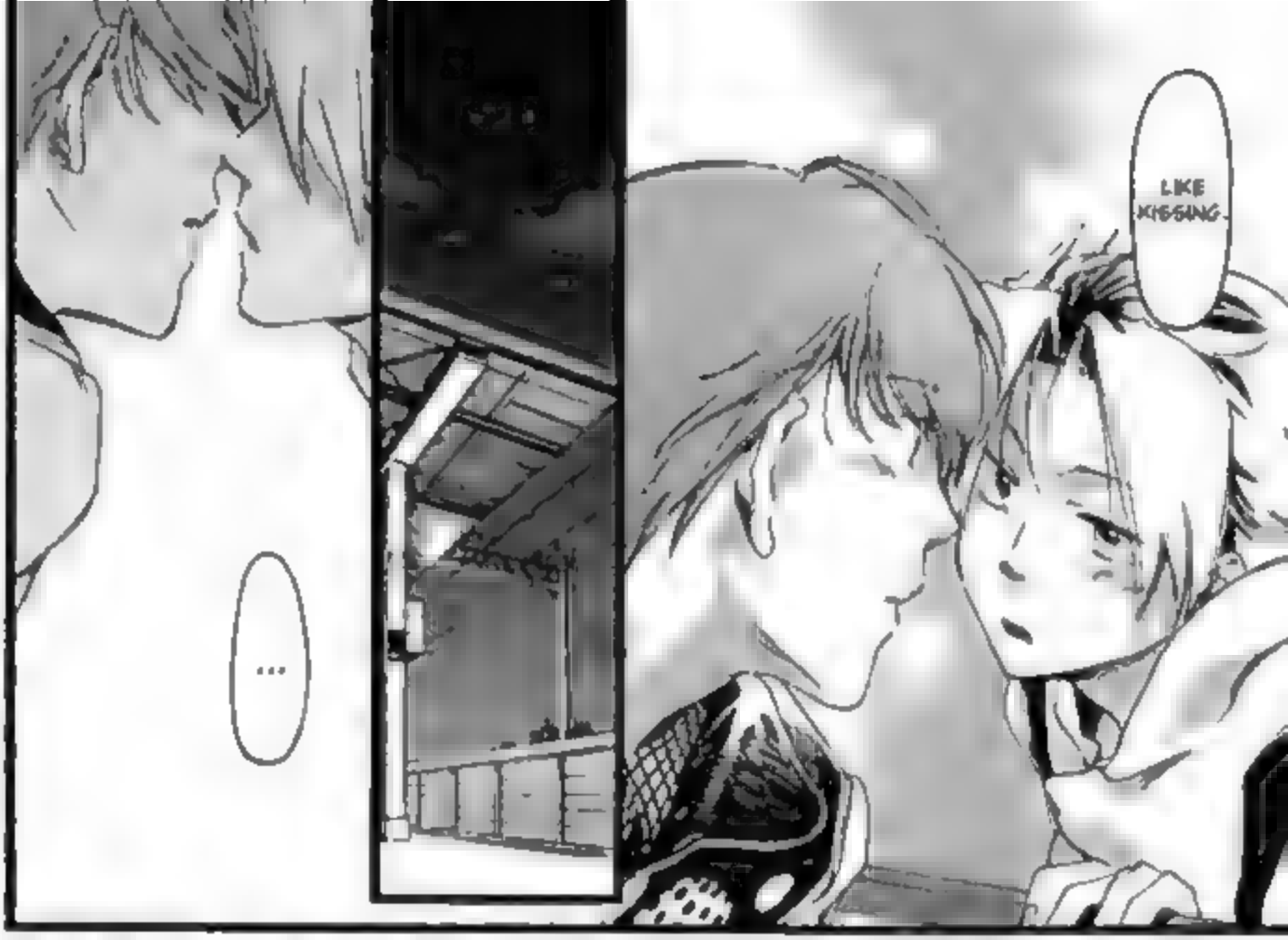
IT AMAZES ME THAT I CAN EVEN CONSIDER THOSE THINGS NOW.
WHAT ABOUT ME?
I WONDER IF THERE'S ANYTHING HE WANTS TO DO WITH ME?
KISS HIM?
HOLD HANDS?
HUG HIM?
...

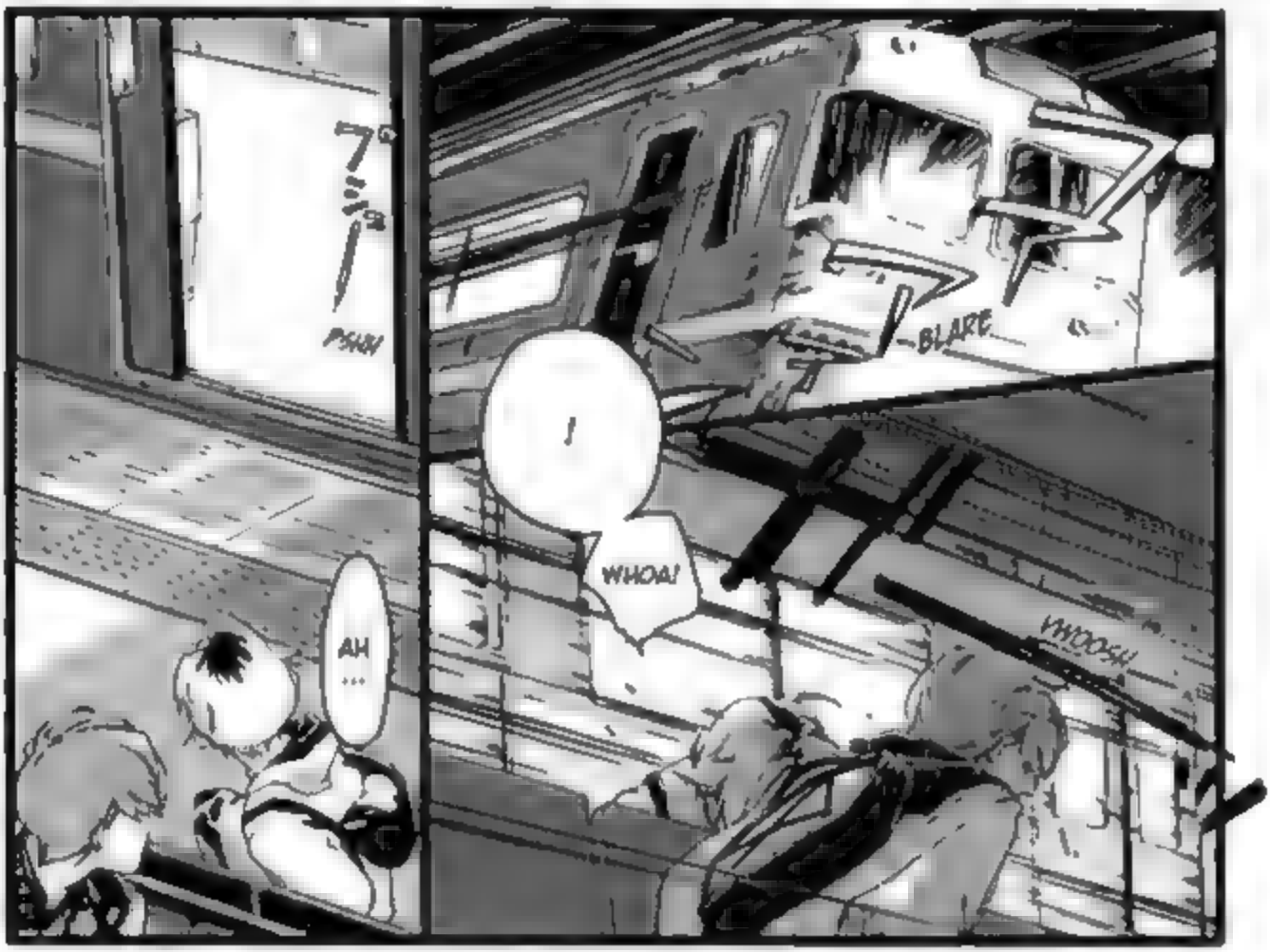
Bwa ha ha ha! You didn't notice at all!
HEY, WHAT HAPPENED?
DON'T LAUGH!
I DIDN'T FORGET ANYTHING.
I TOLD THEM I FORGOT SOMETHING AND CAME BACK. ♪
?
WHAT DID YOU FORGET?
...
...YOU CAME BACK FOR ME?
YOU MEAN ...
SH-SHUT UP!

ARE YOU GOING TO CATCH THE NEXT TRAIN?
Let me...
Stay back! No trespassing
Hey, don't look!
Wow, your face is all red!
Your face is red, too!
THEN YOU SHOULD STAY AT MY PLACE TONIGHT.
There's no school tomorrow
I CAN'T GET HOME IF I MISS IT.
STAY OVER-NIGHT?
I DON'T HAVE ANY SHADY INTENTIONS!
DON'T SAY THAT OUT LOUD!
Just because there aren't many people around...
...

FWIP
...
...
WAH! OH, MY GOD! OH, MY GOD!
!
YOU'RE NOT...
.. INTER-ESTED, ARE YOU?

I AM.
UH...
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP
...I AM.
OF COURSE...
I WAS HESITANT ABOUT SUDDENLY BECOMING YOUR BOYFRIEND!
I'm inexperienced!
NO WAY!
You didn't seem like you were.
WHAT? BUT...
YOU DIDN'T SEEM TO BE INTERESTED IN IT ANYWAY.
LINE TWO TRAIN IS ARRIVING.
PLEASE STAND BEHIND THE WHITE LINE.
HUH?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "IT"?
I MEAN...
UH...


...
LIKE KISSING


PSHH
AH...
!
WHOA!
BLARE
VWOOSH

UM, SEE YA LATER!
WAIT A MINUTE!
WHY? I NEED TO GO.
BUT
YOU'RE ALMOST IN REACH
HAM-CHAN!
YOU FORGOT SOMETHING!
WHAT?
CLICKETY CLACK
CLICKETY CLACK

...
...?
DON'T ...
...JUST BECAUSE NO ONE IS AROUND...
...
AH! UWU
...
FLAP
FLAP
FLAP

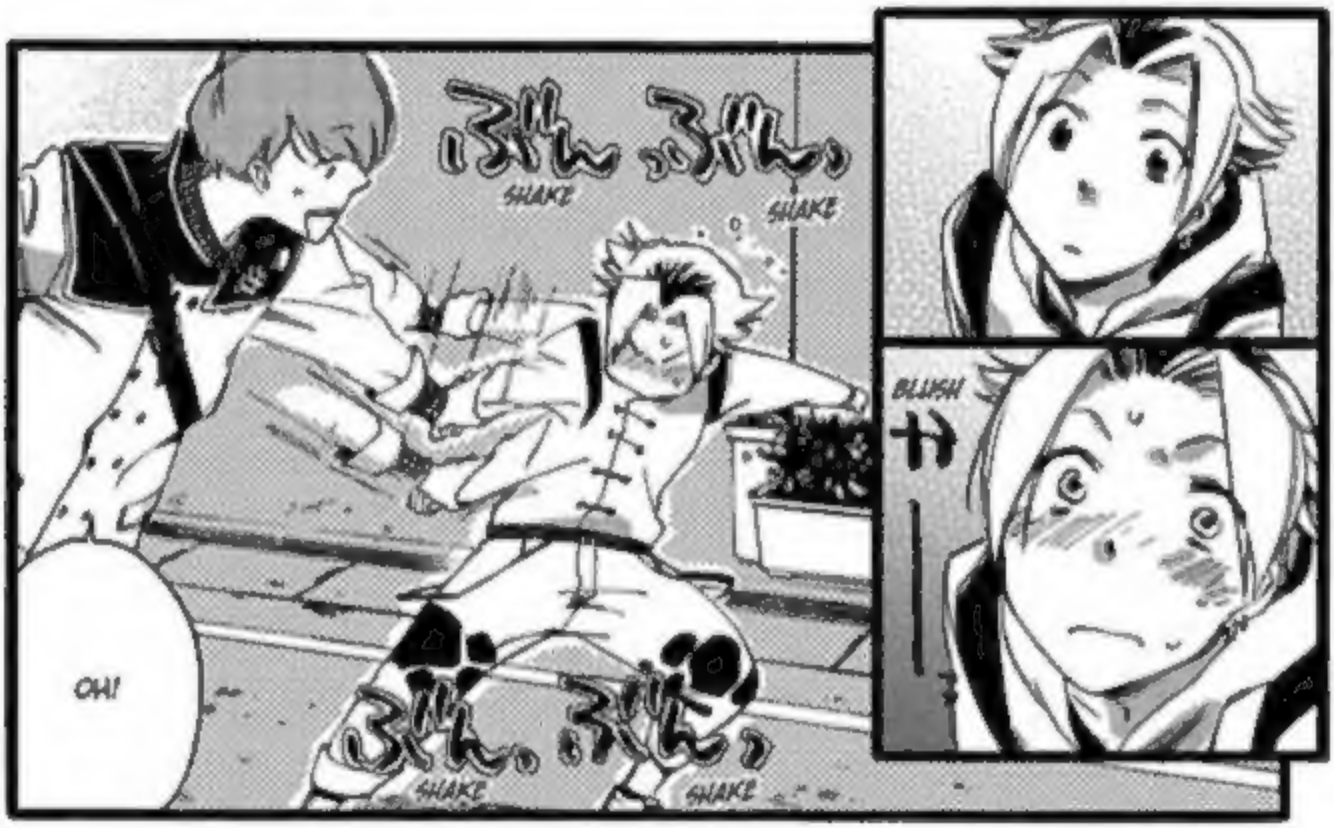
Hello?
HEY, RAKU?
I'VE...
...ALWAYS LOVED YOU.
HUH?
I DIDN'T THINK I COULD LOVE YOU ANY MORE, BUT...
HEY, TAKE IT EASY!
THIS IS AMAZING!

COME ON, ONE MORE TIME!
I CAN'T HELP MYSELF!
ARE YOU AN ANIMAL?!
WHACK
DAMN IT! You made me late!
DID YOUR TRAIN LEAVE?
HEY!
Cobra Stance
ARE THESE YOUR TRUE COLORS?!
...
"YOU SHOULD STAY AT MY PLACE TONIGHT."

ARE... YOU SURE?
WELL...
...WE CAN'T GO BACK NOW.
AHA!
I KNOW.

HEH HEH.
WHAT?
I'VE WANTED TO DO THIS FOR A WHILE.
ちょこちょこ
FWP
Hmph.
Just for a minute.
HEY, I'VE NEVER BEEN TO YOUR PLACE BEFORE.
OH, YEAH.
IT'S JUST ME AND MY PARENTS.
SO YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD YOUR OWN ROOM?
YEAH.
Lucky him.
...
Shared a room with his older sister until recently
PAH

...WHAT I'M THINKING THROUGH MY HAND.
IT'S EMBAR-RASSING.
?
WELL ...
I'M...
...WORRIED YOU MIGHT SENSE...
ABOUT TONIGHT ...
...OF COURSE.
WELL ...
WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?
COME ON. TELL ME!
GRAB


SHAKE
SHAKE
OH!
SHAKE
SHAKE
BLUSH

WE CAN'T TURN BACK ONCE WE REACH IT.
Let me go!
WOW, YOU'VE GOT A DIRTY MIND!
So that's what you're thinking
THAT'S THE RULE OF STANDING ON TIPTOE.
Nope!
EEK! LET GO OF ME!
THE RULE OF STANDING ON TIPTOE // THE END